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LIFE

OF

LORD JEFFREY

WITH

A SELECTION FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

BY LORD COCKBURN

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE COURT OF SESSION IN SCOTLAND.

39960 a.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

EDINBURGH:

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK, NORTH BRIDGE.

MDCCCLII.

EDINBURGH.
PRINTED BY R. & R. CLARK.

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LIFE OF LORD JEFFREY.

SELECTION FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

1.—*To his sister Mary, afterwards Mrs. Napier.*

Glasgow, 1789.

N case I forget, I wish you would bring with u a copy of Virgil, such as that John reads at ool,—the one I have being rather troublesome arry with me when I go to walk. I don't know t account I shall give of myself to Papa, for I ve attended all my classes very ill, and am this ment under a summons of the Principal to com- ar before him and receive condign punishment for on-appearance in the Common Hall above three mes this Session. Poor soul, how dost thou expect escape! Art thou ignorant that the faculty have moderation, or dost thou not know that tears ail not. Lightly as I talk of this matter (general atter I mean), I am somewhat uneasy with regard the ideas my father may entertain of it. I hope, wever, to shew him that I know as much of the atter as those who have paid a *more regular* atten- ion. It *looks* ill however.

2.—*To his sister Mary.*

Oxford, October 25, 1791

My dear Mary—

. . . . . .

I would willingly apologise for my last letter; b the others I am not desirous of speaking. The only failed to give you pleasure. It may have give you pain. I am afraid it has, but this is all con jecture, for I have written so many letters since, tha I cannot say I have any accurate recollection of it contents, only I am sure from the humour I w then in, it must have been very querulous and mela choly; and I am now to bid adieu to that humou I have already re-assumed that merriment of so that airiness of disposition, which has hitherto vated me above the atmosphere of sorrow. yet;—though the clouds of that atmosphere no lo oppress me with that intolerable load under whic panted at first. I feel that I shall never beco attached to this place. There is nothing in it interest me, and though I may cease to complain my situation, it will only be through a dull a despairing resignation. I have succeeded too w in my attempts to form a local attachment to Ed burgh and its environs. My solitary walks, afternoon wanderings by the Calton Hill and Bernard's, have imprinted those objects on heart, and ensured their recollection while I sh continue to know myself.

My appearance is much altered since I can

here. Do not, however, be apprehensive; for, except some symptoms of the Swiss disease, I am in perfect health; and indeed, while I am in the house, my appearance retains its old peculiarities. But without, a great black gown and the portentous square cap conceal the elegance of my form, and overshadow the majesty of my brow. To you I need not describe those habiliments, for you have seen them. Did I tell you the manner of our living here? We occupy, each of us, our separate apartments, and lock ourselves in at night. At seven o'clock we repair to prayers, and it would astonish you to witness the activity with which I spring up at that hour in this cold weather. That detains us half an hour, after which most of us choose to walk till [illegible] o'clock, at which hour a George (that is to say, a round penny roll) is served up, with a bit of butter, upon a pewter plate, into each of our chambers, where we provide our own tea and sugar. We do not often breakfast alone, but generally order our George up to some friend's apartment, and breakfast sociably. From this time till three we do what we please, unless there be any lectures to attend; but at three, the trumpet's martial voice proclaims the hour of dinner, to which we all repair in the Common Hall, after having ordered, in our way through the kitchen, whatever part of the bill of fare we may choose. Allow me to satisfy your curiosity by informing you that we have a clean table-cloth every day. After dinner, we either return each to his own apartment, or, what is more

common, two or three together, who generally drink or laugh till the hour of five warns the bellman to call us again to prayers. Very few of us take any tea—I have never yet. Our supper is served in the same way as breakfast. I have usually chosen to sup alone, and have not yet been out of bed beyond eleven. Our practice upon the road has been of some service in preparing me for those hours of sleeping and waking. You have now some idea how I live. Stupidly enough, is it not? I would willingly change it. This would be tedious to any other body; but, judging of your feelings by my own (and I hope you think that a compliment, as I meant it), I am convinced you will read it with satisfaction.

I used to think a hermit's life a pleasant one, I have often said that solitude is infinitely preferable to any but the best society. And, to say the truth, I still prefer it to most of the society I meet with here. But I cannot help regretting that which I have abandoned in Scotland; even those for whom when they were present, I felt no affection nor regard, have become dear to me now that I can no longer enjoy their society. I do not like my tutor. I cannot bring him to be on that footing of intimacy to which I have brought all his predecessors. I long for some object to fill up the void which the abrupt dissolution of so many affections has left in my heart.

I feel I shall never be a great man, unless it be as a poet; for, though I have a boundless ambition

I am too much the slave of my heart. If I were calmly reposed on the bosom of felicity, I would not leave my family to enjoy a triumph. Write instantly.—I am yours affectionately.

3.—*To his sister Mary.*

Oxford, Queen's College, Nov. 2, 1791.

. . . . . .

Whence arises my affection for the moon. I do not believe there is a being, of whatever denomination, upon whom she lifts the light of her countenance, who is so glad to see her as I am! She is the companion of my melancholy, and the witness of my happiness. There are few people for the sake of whose society I should be glad to shut her out. I went half a mile yesterday to see her on the water, and to-night I have spent the most pleasant hour that I have known these six weeks in admiring her from my back window. This place should never be looked on but by moonlight, and then, indeed, what place does not look well! But there is something striking here—you recollect it—the deep and romantic shades on the sculptured towers—the sparkle of their gilded vanes—their black and pointed shadows upon the smooth green turf of our courts—the strong shades of the statues over the library—the yellow and trembling heads of the trees beyond them! Could I find anybody here who understood these matters, or who thought them worth being understood, I should regain my native

enthusiasm and my wonted enjoyment; but they are all drunkards, or pedants, or coxcombs.

How little does happiness depend upon ourselves! Moralists may preach as they please, but neither temperance, nor fortitude, nor justice, nor charity, nor conscious genius, nor fair prospects, have power to make anybody happy for two days together. For the little power they have they are indebted to their novelty. In short, all our enjoyment here seems to depend upon a certain energy and vigour of mind, which depend upon—we know not what. What has happened to me since the morning? that I am now as cheerful and gay as I was then discontented and unhappy! I believe I have written nonsense, for I have written wholly from myself.

I have almost put out my eyes, and can hardly see to tell you that I am your amiable brother.

4.—*To his sister Mary.*

Oxford, December 12, 1791.

Ah Sorella mia—

. . . . . .

How do you employ your time? I often think the occupations of a lady—high as that title places the honoured bearer—are of a more servile nature than that of a man, and retain some traces of the genius of those days, when all the drudgery of the household was the amusement of its mistress. The employments of all men, who are not mechanics, are chiefly exertions of the mind. Those of the

ladies are, in general, displays of mechanical ingenuity; and the wife of a lawyer, of a divine, and a poet, resemble, in their occupation, the industry of a weaver or a tailor more than that of her husband. For my part, I am astonished how you can continue so long in a state of inaction; and it is the sole foundation of my dislike to a mechanical profession, that it must stagnate and suspend those pleasing labours of the spirit, from which alone I can draw either pride or satisfaction.

To what a superior station of existence does not a taste for literature and a lively fancy elevate the mind! How much superior does it render a man to all wealth and power—to all fortune or fate. The source of the satisfaction I believe to be pride; but I love to feel it nevertheless. I shall not go to London this vacation. A little reflection and a little advice has determined me to keep where I am for another term. So, while you and all the world are laughing, and feasting, and rejoicing, I shall continue quietly and soberly, eating my commons, and reading my folios. I cannot say I feel either dejection or envy in the idea. May they be all as happy as they can, say I to myself, I shall be so much the more so. This is one advantage of the literary and philosophic turn—we scorn to owe our satisfaction to anything else; and so, when the more ordinary means of enjoyment are withheld, pshaw, we say, we can do without them, and then begin to despise the splendour of courts. The sky is heavy with weight of snow, and is easing itself as fast as possible. I suppose we

shall be wading up to the arm-pits to chapel to-morrow.

. . . . . .

I am, yours affectionately.

5.—*To Miss Crockett, a cousin.*

Oxford, 9th March 1792.

My dear Crocke—I fancy I have provoked you. I have entirely forgotten what I wrote in my last, but recollect that it was written immediately after a very hearty dinner, on a very cold and a very cloudy day. I conclude it was incredibly amusing. I beg your pardon—I excuse your silence—and I proceed. But I would excuse anything at present, for I am mollified and melted to the very temper of a lamb within these three weeks, and all owing to the reading of some very large and admirably elegant books; which have so stupified and harassed my understanding, so exercised and confirmed my patience, and, withal, so petrified and deadened my sensibility, that I can no longer perceive or resent any injury or affront that might be offered me. I have just intellect enough remaining to suggest the impropriety of proclaiming this my unhappy state, so tempting to insult or malice; but I know to whom I confide the secret, and I know that I am safe; for benevolence and compassion, especially when allied to a genuine nobility of spirit, will never take advantage of infirmity or misfortune; and the assurance of impunity can only be a temptation to the ungen-

erous and unfeeling. Now I beg you would never think of copying such sentences as these—I mean when you write to me on any other occasion. I am sure your purer taste must render the caution superfluous. There is a charm in simplicity and naturality of expression, for which neither excellent sense, nor egregious sentiment, nor splendid diction, can compensate. But this simplicity, in this vile, conceited, and puerile age, it is infinitely difficult to acquire; and all our best writers since Shakspere, except the gentle Addison, and sometimes Sterne, have given up the attempt in despair, and trusted to gaudier vehicles for the conveyance of their respective reputations to the ears of posterity, and the mansion of fame; which practice, you will allow, is greatly to the prejudice of those who are taught to consider them as the models of fine writing. However, I intend in a year or two to correct the depravity of taste, and to revive the simple and the sublime in all their purity, and in all their majesty. This, you will perceive, is private and confidential. I wish you understood Latin, and particularly Greek, that you might understand what it is that I am talking about, in which wish I doubt nothing you join me most cordially. Now you conceive I am grown a pedant; that I have done nothing but read law and language and science since I came here. Shall I tell you the truth, though it would be a pity to undeceive you in an error so flattering to my diligence and industry? I never was so dissipated in my life; being out almost

every day, and pestered with languor all the morning. But the vacation is coming on, and we shall have leisure enow, and there will be nothing but reading, and then we will get learning enow, &c.

. . . . . .

Write me a letter as long as these two last of mine, and believe me, yours intensely, F. JEFFREY.

6.—*To Miss Crockett.*

Oxford, 10th June 1792.

Dear Crocke—My memory is strangely confused. I am positive that I wrote to you, about the date of your last, but whether before or after receiving it, I vainly fatigue myself to remember. I am still in the same state of uncertainty with regard to my return to Scotland, which I endeavoured to relieve by the enquiries you satisfied so kindly—for you will allow that these responses form no authority; but my suspense must necessarily receive a speedy termination, as I have sometime ago applied to my father for an absolute and categorical answer. If this answer be such as I desire and expect, I shall see you long before harvest, for in less than a fortnight the period of my academical residence expires, and I am inclined to bargain with them as strictly as possible, &c. &c. . . . . I rejoice in the idea of returning among you, because I shall then recover leisure, tranquillity, and content—because I shall then once more behold the image of domestic peace, and experience that soft and sooth-

ing sort of satisfaction which the temperate affections of relationship, &c., contribute to form. You must not, therefore, expect any symptoms of complete happiness; but, on the contrary, must be prepared to behold a countenance rather dismal, bearing traces of regret for time squandered and money misspent—showing visibly the vestiges of disappointment, and shaded by an expression of anxiety and thoughtfulness justified and introduced by my situation. This, however, is Sunday, and has been gladdened with no sun. So in the gloom I may have shaded rather too deeply. This is very shameful weather, but very favourable for study. I do my endeavour at times, but have neither memory nor perseverance. Oxford is no longer so deeply the object of my detestation as it was. I no longer feel the rigour of its exactions; I don't go to lecture more than thrice a week; and for morning prayers, I have not thought of them this half year. That deceitful fellow of a tutor took advantage of my ignorance, and told me nothing but lies. Yours sincerely, &c. F. JEFFREY.

7.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 30th March 1793.

My dear John*—

. . . . . .

There are no news here but public news, and these are too copious, too notorious, and too un-

* Who was in America.

pleasing, to be chronicled by my pen. I care very little in my own person about government or politics; but I cannot see without pain the destructive violence of both parties—a violence which, even in its triumph, can never be productive of peace; since opinion is endeared by contradiction—since force is insufficient to convince—and since affection is rivetted to those principles in whose cause we have suffered. Such is the state of the public mind, that I get the name of a violent man for regretting the effusion of blood, and for wishing for universal concord!

Your worship has thought fit to keep me excluded from the circle of your new friends. But there is nothing in the world I detest so much as companions and acquaintances, as they are called. Where intimacy has gone so far as to banish reserve, to disclose character, and to communicate the reality of serious opinions, the connection may be the source of much pleasure—it may ripen into friendship, or subside into esteem. But to know half a hundred fellows just so far as to speak and walk and lounge with them; to be acquainted with a multitude of people, for all of whom together you do not care one farthing; in whose company you speak without any meaning, and laugh without any enjoyment; whom you leave without any regret, and rejoin without any satisfaction; from whom you learn nothing, and in whom you love nothing—to have such a set for your society, is worse than to live in absolute solitude; and is a thousand times more

pernicious to the faculties of social enjoyment, by circulating in its channels a stream so insipid. Thus we form men of the world—the most unhappy and most unamiable of beings.

. . . . . .

Dear Hiero, yours very affectionately.

8.—*To Mr. Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 25th June 1793.

My dear Robert*—I sit down to write to you at present, merely because I feel a conviction that I ought to do so, and an inclination to do so, without any hopes of amusing, or great probability of pleasing you. A certain load of sensations which possessed me all the time I was at Herbertshire, and which I had not the resolution to express, I have since endeavoured to overcome, and will not allow myself at present to indulge. Though I never experienced more sorrow and regret than during the period of my late visit, I am now well pleased that I have made it, since I have seen that reality which my imagination had so far outgone. I will not speak to you of what has happened, nor trust myself to offer you consolation on a subject where I am not sufficiently indifferent to be convincing. We cannot but remember such things were, nor would we wish, I think, to forget them. There is a sanctity in such recollections which elevates and refines; a tenderness which endears while it distresses; and from

* Mr. Morehead senior had recently died.

which it is not by indifference that we wish to be relieved. It is needless to say more. These impressions are to be preserved, and to be reserved; by them we are restored to those from whom we have parted, and enabled to converse with those who yet live in our affections. Yet it is not fit that this temper be indulged to the utmost. That unfortunate disposition of mind which, under the cover of an amiable tendency, is apt to establish itself in the breast; which leads us to lose the present in the remembrance of the past, and extends to the entire and varied scenes of felicity the gloom which may darken its immediate confines; which broods deeply over calamities which admit not of relief, and grows insensible to comfort by the habitual contemplation of distress—such a disposition is, of all others, the most to be repressed, and the most to be apprehended. We mourn not for the dead, but for the living; we weep for our own misfortunes; and we ought to be ashamed of an excess in the indulgence of a feeling which borders pretty nearly upon selfishness. I do not say this because I think it applicable or necessary in your case, but because I feel it to be true, and because I can say nothing else upon a subject on which it is impossible for me to be silent.

. . . . .

Yours very affectionately.

9.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 2d March 1794.

My dear John—I wrote you very lately, indeed in the beginning of last week; sending my letter in a box that was to go by Captain Scott, who, I daresay, will not leave Britain sooner than this. The easy consciences of our ladies are satisfied with the recollection of the recent discharge, and give no attention to the speeches in which I have been admonishing them of the hazard to which they expose their own regularity, and your tranquillity, by their neglect. But I, who possess, as you, an unwearied spirit in doing courtesies, have undertaken their task, and their apology, &c.

I have been so closely occupied in hearing and writing law lectures ever since November, that a short interval of leisure very much distresses me; for the habit I have acquired of doing nothing but my task, prevents me from laying it out to any advantage, and the shortness of its duration will not allow me to supplant that habit. If this be a specimen of the life which I am hereafter to lead, though the stupidity which accompanies it may prevent me from feeling much actual uneasiness, yet the remembrance of other days will always be attended with regret. That sort of resignation of spirit which was favoured by the depression and the confinement of winter, is beginning to fail on the approach of spring; and, raised by the rustling of the western gales, and the buds, and the sun, and the showers,

my spirits have awakened once again, and are execrating the torpor in which they have been lost. This I write you merely because it is what is uppermost in my mind at present, and because I would have you accustomed in due time not to look for my success as a man of business. Every day I see greater reason for believing that this romantic temper will never depart from me now. Vanity indulged it at the first, but it has obtained the support of habit, and, as I think, of reason, &c.—I am, yours very truly.

10.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 1st June 1794.

My dear John—What shall I say to you now? or what will you say for yourself, when you come to know that we have received no letters from you for three months, &c.

We are in a strange situation enough here. I have often determined to send you a detailed account of the state of the public mind of this country, but have always wanted room, or time, or something, as indeed I do at present. However, I must say a few words. Every man, you know, who thinks at all, must think differently from every other; but there are three parties, I think, distinguishable enough. The first, which is the loudest, and I believe the most powerful, is that of the fierce aristocrats—men of war, with their swords and their rank—men of property, with their hands on their pockets, and their eyes staring wildly with alarm

and detestation—men of indolence and morosity, and, withal, men of place and expectation. The desperate democrats are the second order—numerous enough too, and thriving like other sects under persecution. Most of them are led; so their character is to be taken from that of their leaders. These are, for the most part, men of broken fortunes, and of desperate ambition, and animated by views very different from their professions. To these are joined some, whom a generous and sincere enthusiasm has borne beyond their interest; irritated perhaps excessively at the indiscriminating intolerance of the alarmists, and zealous in the assertion of some truths, which those with whom they co-operate have used as a decoy. The third order is that of philosophers, and of course very small. These necessarily vary in their maxims and opinions, and only agree in blaming something more or less in both parties, and in endeavouring to reconcile their hostility. We have been disturbed by rumours of conspiracy and intended massacre; certainly exaggerated by the organs of alarm, but probably not destitute of all foundation; and many precautions are taking to secure our peace upon the approaching birth-day, &c.*

You will see the progress of the war. I wish you could see the end of it, and hope most fervently that it will not extend itself between your country and mine, though your fortifications and embargo are very ominous. Tell me what you think of the

* The birthday of George the Third, on 4th June.

mad people of Europe. Such things should come near the minds of individuals, and they do occupy a large share in ordinary discourse. But in the detail of domestic life and spontaneous meditation, which has to distinguish the character of men, and the objects of their genuine regard, I do not perceive that they enter very deeply. One speaks upon politics in general company with one's acquaintance; at home, and with one's friends, they are scarcely to be heard. Men jest, and laugh, and sleep, and love, and quarrel, without any regard to the state of the nation, or much thought of their political duties or rights. In this age I fancy it must be so everywhere. But according to these principles, it is treating you like a stranger to dwell so long upon these topics. Why do you not tell me more of the American women, and particularly of the fair Quakeress of Boston?—I am, dear John, yours, &c.

11.—*To Mr. Robert Morehead.*

Herbertshire, 22d December 1795.

My dear Bob—I miss you more here than I did in Edinburgh; and, though I only came here yesterday, I can live no longer without talking to you in some way or other. While I was at home, I used to imagine that you were here as usual, and did not feel myself more separated than I was during the whole of last winter. But here, where I am so much accustomed to be with you, I am made sensible of wanting you morning, noon, and night, &c.

Have you ever observed that the letters of friends are filled with egotism? For my part I think very suspiciously of every letter that is not, and propose my own as a model to you in this respect. Indeed when a man writes, as I do now, merely from the loquacity of friendship, and the recollection of personal intimacy, what subject can he have but himself, or the person to whom he writes? His letter, therefore, will be a succession of egotisms and enquiries, which will fall to be answered by egotisms and retaliated enquiries. Such letters are to me always the most interesting, and indeed the only interesting; for surely whatever you tell me, or whatever reflection you make, might have been conveyed to me by any other channel, and is only interesting by its distant relation to you. I believe this is true with every other composition as well as letters, and all the pathetic passages in an author will be found to be egotistical to the feelings of the speaker. For as no other can feel as strongly a man's situation as himself, his own account of it must always be the most animated and more engaging, for the most part, than his account of anything else. I don't know why I have been led so far from myself as to tell you all this, but I return immediately upon recollection. I want to know what you are studying, and what distribution you make of your time. I have been doing little but vexing myself with law. However, I have set to a new history of the American war, and read Mrs. Woolstoncroft's French Revolution and other demo-

cratical books with great zeal and satisfaction. I wish you would tell me about your Balliol political clubs. I have also written 600 lines in a translation of the Argos of old Appollonius, which I am attempting in the style of Cowper's Homer; and it is not much further below him, than my original is under his. We have had no sunshine nor frost here for three weeks, and are almost melted with rain. The Carron is bellowing with a most dreadful violence at this moment, &c.

12.—*To Mr. Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 7th May 1796.

Bobby, man—What are you doing? If I have written you three letters, why do you not write me three? Are we to relapse again into our obsolete style of apologies and reproaches? &c. I almost forgot to tell you that I attended at the commemoration of the first of May,* in spite of your absence, and wearied almost as much as I used to do when you were there. The elocution was rather worse than that of last year, nor was anything very different or remarkable, but the abilities of young Watt,† who obtained by far the greatest number of prizes, and degraded the prize readers most inhumanly by reading a short composition of his own, a transla-

* The annual prize distribution at Glasgow College.

† Gregory Watt, a son of James Watt, who, after giving evidence of talents worthy of his illustrious father, died in his twenty-seventh year, in 1805.

tion of the chorus in the Medea, with so much energy and grace, that the verses seemed to me better perhaps than they were in reality. He is a young man of very eminent capacity, and seems to have all the genius of his father, with a great deal of animation and ardour which is all his own. I expected at one time to have had an opportunity of making myself more intimately acquainted with him, as he engaged to walk with me from Glasgow to Edinburgh, but was prevented by some orders from his father, so I came alone. I shall be constantly here, I suppose, till after your arrival in Scotland—an event to which we can now look forward with some distinctness and certainty. You will not find me, I believe, very much of a lawyer, either in employment or conversation, nor indeed much altered, I fancy, from what I was when you saw me last.—I am, dear Bob, most truly yours.

13.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 20th May 1796.

My dear John—I wrote you in the beginning of this month, and promised, and meant, to have written you again within a shorter time than I have already permitted to pass. I have been ever since indeed, most abominably idle, and neglected every kind of duty and engagement. I have a way, too, of replying to my conscience, when it importunes me on your behalf, that I have already done a great deal more than I was bound to do, and that if I do

neglect you for a little while, it is but a fair and slight return for the many omissions of which you have already been guilty. If you were to make it an excuse that you have nothing to say, it would not be true; for I have asked you a hundred questions which you have never yet answered, and it would besides be an excuse which I have never allowed to seduce me, though it be continually present to me, and does very well to palliate the stupidity of my letters, though I will not let it prevent me from writing them.

It is now just about a year since you visited us here, though it seems to me, upon recollection, the shortest year that I ever spent. If they go on shortening as they multiply upon us, we shall grow old in such a hurry that our schemes of life will be left unfinished, and we shall scarcely know how we have lived when we are summoned to die. For my part, I have such a deal of business upon my hands, that I must be allowed a good long day to finish it in. I have to visit one-half at least of the nations of the earth, and gather together one-half of its learning. Then I have to seek me out some angelic partner, and engender a dozen or two of children, and educate them after our own image. And, above all, and what should have come first, I have to acquire a comfortable fortune, and a pretty independence of all men, and all events. Of this I have not yet seen the beginning, and am better pleased indeed to imagine the end, than to investigate how I am likely to get at it.

But not to wander any further, which, in my American correspondence, I feel myself much tempted to do, I have to satisfy you in a few words as to all your friends here, by informing you that they remain so much in the condition in which you left them, that it is impossible for me, who have been continually with them, to discover any change. My father, I think, is rather better if anything, although almost as desperate an aristocrat as before, &c.

Our friend Dr. Spence protests that he will be on your continent in a month or two. His affairs in Carolina are not yet managed to his satisfaction, and the opportunity of Pinkney's retreat tempts him with the prospect of good accommodation. I do not think he will go, and wish he would send me;—for to come to myself, I am doing very little here, and see the competition of interest and relationship grow so extensive every day in our profession, that, with all the sanguine spirits in the world, I cannot believe that my share of its profits will ever be worth very much. I spend my time, however, in gratitude to Providence I must say it, more pleasantly at present than if I were more employed in the law. I read Don Quixote and Lopez de Vega in Spanish, and work away in my Greek translations with a fine poetical fury. Within these ten days I have also begun a course of medical reading, and expect to deserve a degree before the end of summer. It is the finest weather in the world. The whole country is covered with green and blossoms. And the sun shines perpetually through a

light east wind, which would have brought you here from Boston since it began to blow. Write me a long account of your situation, your prospects, metamorphoses, and meditations; and, above all, if you must become weary in the cause of writing to me, do not at least let me see it so plainly, nor lengthen out a languid page with laborious sentences, &c.

14.—*To George J. Bell, Esq.*

Herbertshire, 7th October 1796.

Dear Bell—You take your turn, I see, to rage and revile. I like to see that. It gives me courage, and excuses for going on in my favourite style when my turn comes round again. You have taken a long time, however, to reply to the letter which put you into such a passion. Now, my furies are a great deal more natural, for they assault immediately upon provocation. However, we shall make some allowance for your prodigious business and natural proneness to anger, and say no more about it, &c.

I pass my time here much more to my own satisfaction. When my friend Bob is absent, I am rarely visible till dinner-time, and read and write in so great a variety of acts and interludes, that there is almost as little fatigue as instruction in it. As I have given myself no task, I think myself privileged to be idle. So I exult and compliment myself whenever I do anything, and feel no remorse when I do nothing, and I never do worse. I have

had a little experiment of solitude for two days past—the whole household having been engaged one day to a formal visitation, and the next to the county ball; and I having obstinately refused to accompany them to either, I have been left to the absolute and uncontrolled possession of the house; and have spent two such tranquil, romantic days, that I am determined to get a cottage, or a tub, or some such convenience, for myself in a wilderness next summer, and purify and exalt myself by my own conversation for some months. I think I must make the experiment of eating grass, or some other kind of provender, for it would quite destroy the elegance of my seclusion to have a baker's boy and a butcher and an old woman continually intruding upon me. Nothing can be more ridiculous than the way in which men live together in society, and the patience with which they submit to the needless and perpetual restraint that they occasion to one another; and the worst of it is, that it spoils them for anything better, and makes a gregarious animal of a rational being. I wish I had learned some mechanical trade, and would apply to it yet, were it not for a silly apprehension of silly observation. At present I am *absolutely* unfit for anything; and, with middling capacities, and an inclination to be industrious, have as reasonable a prospect of starving as most people I know. I do not think our profession will do for me, for, except through the patronage of my friends, I have yet found no employment in it; and I do not at present recollect any other kind of

occupation, except, indeed, the old ones of digging or begging, for which I am at all qualified. This is lamentable enough, particularly in this age of politics, and to a man who has such a disposition towards marriage, and beneficence, and reformation, as I have.

I am so perfectly undecided as to my future motions during this vacation, that I cannot give you the least intimation of the time when I shall visit Cults. I like to reserve for every moment of my time the privilege of choosing its own occupation, and see no necessity for tying myself down by promises to do what I may afterwards dislike, or even for perplexing myself with enquiries into my own intentions, and the probability of my future inclinations. However, if my friend Bob sets out for Oxford from Glasgow, I shall probably go there with him in the end of next week; and then there is a good chance for my passing by Cults to Edinburgh, though I may be disposed, perhaps, rather to go into the Highlands a little way, and return to Edinburgh by Dunkeld and St. Andrews. However, I shall take care to let you know before I come upon you. We have a blue sky here, and white clouds, very prettily fancied; clear northern gales from the shady ridges above us, and a very good allowance of sunshine for the fading woods and the foamy streams. The banks of the Carron are extremely beautiful here, and have all varieties at large, in the course of five miles; cultivated plains, with corn, trees, villages, manufactures, and *policies*;* rocky

* The Scotch term for pleasure-grounds.

and woody glens of all shapes and sizes; and desolate valleys, between stony mountains, and breezy sloping pastures. It would be worth your while to come and see them before the leaves fall. I can assure you an hospitable reception. If you should not like it, you will return to Cults and Lord Stair with increased relish. I am glad to hear you are studying anatomy. It is better than law. But the heart and the blood-vessels, I am afraid, would be too much for my nerves. I wish you would explain them to me, without making me think of my own.—I am always most truly yours.

15.—*To Mr. Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 26th November 1796.

My dear Bob—I have been pestered with a great deal of insignificant and unprofitable business; till I have got into such a habit of complaining, that I can scarcely help murmuring even when I get a fee. In these moments I envy you exceedingly, and think that I should be almost quite happy if I had nothing to do but read and amuse myself from one week to another. It would not be the case, however. A man must have something to do in order to prevent him from wearying of his own existence; and something it must be, imposed upon him to do, under more precise and specific penalties than that of the mere weariness that he would feel by neglecting it. So that if he be not in such a situation as will sometimes oblige him to complain of the

drudgery to which he is tasked, he will generally find himself in a situation much more to be complained of. This is a very comfortable philosophy, and very convenient for the cure of discontent, though it is often rejected when the fit is on, and can only be forced down by great vigour and perseverance on the part of the prescriber. Taken, however, along with a due proportion of experience, it has been found very efficacious as a preventative. Though I have so much business as to need the application of these profound reflections, I begin to weary of myself too, I think, sometimes, and take up a very contemptible notion of the value of my solitary employments. I find that I can order my own thoughts, and pursue to a clear conclusion any speculation that occurs, with infinitely greater ease in the course of conversation, than by thinking or writing in my study; and that, independently of the information I may derive by observing the course of thought in my companions. I have determined to extend my acquaintance a little wider this season than I have hitherto done, and to accustom myself to that extemporary exertion which the purposes of society require. One is apt, I know, to conceive an undue contempt for the world by living too much apart from it; and to acquire a kind of dictatorial and confident manner by pursuing all one's speculations without the interference of anybody, or apprehension of any corrector. My situation is very favourable to any scheme of making new acquaintances; but this will only lead me to

them more select, as it will limit them to a few. I read nothing but the most idle kind of books, and write nothing but what I am paid for, except these letters to you, and one or two more, who are contented to take them as they are. Of my reading, and the profit I am likely to derive from it, you may judge from the pile of books that were brought up to me half an hour ago from the library. There are letters from Scandinavia, a collection of curious observations upon Africa, Asia, and America, a book of old travels, an absurd French folio romance, and I don't know what besides. I ought to mention though, that I have begun to read Plato's Republic, though I advance with a most cautious slowness in it. I have resolved too, as I believe I told you before, to read a regular course of chemistry this season, and am just wavering and deciding whether I should enter into a class for the winter that will be formed in a week hereafter. Pray Bob, are you a democrat? or what? You need not be afraid of my exposing you. I shall keep anything secret that you please; but I do not wish you to have these things quite a secret from me, and am especially unwilling to let you still keep your sentiments of them a secret from yourself. You need have no apprehensions either lest I should fill my letters with political discussions. They are too laborious to suit the temper in which I usually write to you, [illegible] too large to take their place within the limits [illegible]r. I forgot in my last to take any notice [illegible] of study. I am glad that the view you

have taken of it gave you pleasure and humiliation. These are exactly the emotions which will secure your improvement, and are symptoms as favourable as could have appeared. You are quite right, I think, in the distribution you have made of your time, except that to prescribe a certain occupation even to days, is perhaps still too minute. You can have no better regulator than your own successive opinions. Let me hear from you, dear Bobby, very soon, and inform me of any thing I used to ask.—Believe me always, my dear Bob, most truly yours

16.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Glasgow, 12th November 1797.

My dear Citizen—I received your last letter two or three days ago, and should have been very angry, I believe, notwithstanding your compliments and contrition, for not receiving it sooner, had I not heard a great deal about you, a week before from your friend Bobby Sinclair. I am really growing a very bad correspondent myself, and am so much humiliated at the perception of this degeneracy, that I have not the heart to blame any other body for resembling me, &c.

I took a fit of impatience about three days ago; and, considering that in less than a week I would be chained up for the whole winter, I left all my papers in the middle, and scampered away to [redacted] bertshire, from which I came here yester[redacted] my friend Bob, who has changed h[redacted]

once more, and has determined to attend Millar's lectures in this place through the winter. He has evidently a hankering after the Scotch bar, though he says he has decided upon nothing, and merely attends this course as the most improving that offers itself while he is uncertain. I return again to Edinburgh to-morrow, and begin the labours of the session on the day following.

I am glad you talk so confidently about coming here in the course of the winter. You will find us all, I think, in the same situation you left us in, with the exception of some capital improvements in my person and dispositions, which it would be of more importance for you to see and imitate, than to run round all Europe in the way you have been doing. One singular grace I flatter myself I have improved very much since I saw you, and that is political moderation. You talk to me about my democracy. I am the most moderate of all people. I have no hopes scarcely to be disappointed in, and put no confidence in any party, or any professions. I shall talk to you like an oracle on these subjects, and make your hair stand on end with astonishment at the liberality and wisdom of a man who has never been out of Scotland. But I write very tediously upon them; at least, I weary myself even before I have begun. My hands are quite frozen, and I have a great number of things to do before dinner yet.—I am always, dear Cit., very affectionately yours.

17.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 21st November 1797.

My dear Citizen—

. . . .

I am at this moment exceedingly busy, and have no leisure even to send you that scold, which does not come so readily to me as it once did. I am not only in the beginning of the session, when (in consequence of the *vis inertiæ* which I have been cherishing in the vacation) it always requires a great deal more labour to do less work; but as the President has been very sick for these two days, and I am determined to make a hard push for the chair, in case of a vacancy, you will easily understand that I am very much engaged with my canvass, and have very little time to spare from the fatigue of bribing, and promising, and corrupting. Indeed I could not have offered to write to you at all at this busy time, if I could have afforded to go on without you; but my funds are almost exhausted, and I am under the necessity of applying to you for a remittance, &c.

Tell me some more of your way of life, and the emigrants, with whom you are corrupting. The greater part of them are fools, I fancy; not exactly for leaving France, but for having been bred in it like noblemen and courtiers. The women, I suppose, are the best. What is their character in poverty and humiliation? I really pity these people. But so much of their unhappiness arises from the loss of what was truly of no value, and it would

take so much, not merely of money, but of liberty and common sense, to satisfy them entirely, that it is wrong even to wish for it, and better, upon the whole, to let these things remain with their present possessors. I am not much afraid of your growing too much of an aristocrat. There never will be another race of these fanatics. The thing (in its madness and abuse) is quite at an end. Do not write me any more politics, unless it be anecdotes or news. —Very affectionately yours.

18.—*To Mr. Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 6th August 1798.

Well, I owe you a letter, I suppose, Bobby. And what then? That may be many an honest man's case as well as mine; and there may be apologies, I suppose, and whys and wherefores, of which you know nothing, nor I neither. I will make you no apology. I have forgiven you ten letters in my time, and wrote on without calculating the amount of my debt, &c. Why do I write you this, Bobby? or why, in my present humour, do I write you at all? Principally, I believe, to tell you that I expect very soon to see you, and to tell you that there is no person whom I think of seeing with greater pleasure, or towards whom it would be more unjust to suspect me of forgetfulness or unkindness. I have said very soon, but I do not mean immediately —two lines will tell you the whole. Dr. Thomas Brown and I (your brother John will join us, I be-

lieve) propose to set out about the end of this month, and to travel in your track (only reversedly) through Cumberland and Wales, till we fall in with you at Oxford, or somewhere else, on our way to London. What, my dear Bobby, are we turning into? I grow, it appears to myself, dismally stupid and inactive. I lose all my originalities, and ecstacies, and romances, and am far advanced already upon that dirty highway called the way of the world. I have a kind of unmeaning gaiety that is fatiguing and unsatisfactory, even to myself; and though, in the brilliancy of this sarcastic humour, I can ridicule my former dispositions with admirable success, yet I regret the loss of them much more feelingly, and really begin to suspect that the reason and gross common sense by which I now profess to estimate everything, is just as much a vanity and delusion as any of the fantasies it judges of. This at least I am sure of, that these poetic visions bestowed a much purer and more tranquil happiness than can be found in any of the tumultuous and pedantic triumphs that seem now within my reach; and that I was more amiable, and quite as respectable, before this change took place in my character. I shall never arrive at any eminence either in this new character; and have glimpses and retrospective snatches of my former self, so frequent and so lively, that I shall never be wholly estranged from it, nor more than half the thing I seem to be driving at. Within these few days I have been more perfectly restored to my poesies and sentimentalities than I

had been for many months before. I walk out every day alone, and as I wander by the sunny sea, or over the green and solitary rocks of Arthur Seat, I feel as if I had escaped from the scenes of impertinence on which I had been compelled to act, and recollect, with some degree of my old enthusiasm, the wild walks and eager conversation we used to take together at Herbertshire about four years ago. I am still capable, I feel, of going back to these feelings, and would seek my happiness, I think, in their indulgence, if my circumstances would let me. As it is, I believe, I shall go on sophisticating and perverting myself till I become absolutely good for nothing, &c.—Truly and affectionately yours.

19.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 4th March 1799.

My dear John—I wrote you a dull letter of news yesterday, for the packet, and have tasked myself to make a kind of duplicate of it, to go by some ship or other from London, &c.

My first article of intelligence relates to our poor grandmother's death. She died on the 22d of last month; and as literally and truly of old age, I believe, as any of the old patriarchs did. She had been wasting away, by sensible degrees, for several months, and died at last without pain or struggle. It was an event so long expected that it occasioned little emotion to anybody. Miss Crockett, who was naturally most affected by it, very soon recovered

her ordinary spirits and tranquillity. I declare to you, I do not know anybody so worthy of admiration and esteem as this cousin of ours. She has sacrificed, not only her youth and her comfort, to the discharge of an uninteresting duty, but has voluntarily given up the improvement of her manners and her understanding for the sake of it. Yet it requires reflection to find out all the merit; and there was something so unostentatious, and unaffected, in the whole course of her attention, that it never struck us as a thing to be wondered at, &c.

Mary is domesticating with her husband, her child, and her cat. Indeed, she scarcely ever stirs from the fireside, and having got another child to bring into existence by and by, is so full of anxieties and apprehensions, that I believe she scarcely thinks of anything that is not within her own gates. Examples of this kind really give me a horror of matrimony; at least, they persuade me more and more of the necessity there is for completing one's stores of information, and sources of reflection and entertainment, before they enter into it. There is no possibility of improvement afterwards; that is, if one is really to live a matrimonial life.

Now, for myself and my system of nerves; I believe they are much better, I thank you, than they were when you saw me in London. I have not given them fair play either, since my return to this country, and have not had the virtue to fulfil every part of the moral regimen which my doctors concurred in recommending to me. However, as I

have survived the winter, I make no question of getting quite well before midsummer, and have no fear of ever falling into the same state again. So much for goods of the body. As to the goods of fortune, I can say but little for myself. I have got no legacies, and discovered no treasure, since you went away; and for the law and its honours and emoluments, I do not seem to be any nearer them than I was the first year I called myself a practitioner. One is quite buried here, among a great crowd of men of decent abilities, and moderate expectation, and it is almost necessary that some great man, or some great accident, should pull you out of it, before you can come into any kind of desirable notice. Geo. Bell, honest man, is writing a great book, upon which he means to raise himself (as a pedestal) above the heads of all his contemporaries. I have not patience for that; at least, I should like to see how the experiment answers before I think of repeating it. John Wylde* dashed his brains out, by a fall from an elevation of that kind, &c.

I want to hear, too, whether you intend to marry immediately, or take another survey of our European beauties before you attach yourself irrevocably. For my part, I think I should marry in the course of this century, if I had only money enough to subsist upon. For the woman, I have no doubt I should find one to my mind in a fortnight; and, indeed, I

* "John Wylde, afterwards Professor of Civil Law, and who has now, alas! survived his own fertile and richly-endowed mind."—MACKINTOSH.

know more than half a dozen as it is, with whom, upon a shorter notice, I am positive, I could become as much in love as is at all necessary for an affair of that nature.

I begin to despair now of the fortunes of Europe, and scarcely know what to advise the princes and potentates to do for themselves. Something, however, must be done for them speedily, and a hint from you would, I doubt not, be of the greatest service to them, &c.—Most affectionately yours.

20.—*To George J. Bell, Esq.*

Montrose, 26th August 1799.

Dear Bell—Here we are, only at Montrose yet, you see; and it is only by wondrous exertions that we have got so far. We stopped for two days at Perth, hoping for places in the mail, and then set forward on foot in despair. We have trudged it now for fifty miles, and came here this morning very weary, sweaty, and filthy. Our baggage, which was to have left Perth the same day that we did, has not yet made its appearance, and we have received the comfortable information that it is often a week before there is room in the mail to bring such a parcel forward. In this forlorn situation we have done what we could. We have made clean the outside of the platter, shaved and washed our faces, turned our neckcloths, brushed our pantaloons, and anointed our hair with honey water; and so we have been perambulating the city, and have accepted

an invitation from Mr. Wm. Baillie, writer in Edinburgh, to whom John Taylor had fortunately given us a letter. Is this account enough of our proceedings, do you think? or must I describe Scone and Glammis Castle to you, and give you a picture of Forfar, Brechin, and the Grampians? You shall have all that when I come home; for down goes everything into my journal; though, to confess the truth, I have been obliged to write Bob's ever since we left Perth, having packed up my own by mistake in my trunk.

The weather has been delightful ever since we set out (a special providence no doubt), and we have been quite well (all except my nose, which is still in a perilous way, and threatens a new eruption very soon again), and in excellent humour. Bob lugs along with him, in his bosom, and his breeches, and one way or another, a volume of Petrarch, a Northern Tour, and a volume of Cicero; so we have occupation enough when we do not choose to talk, and have succeeded wonderfully in making sonnets and sapphics upon all the oddities we have met with. Montrose is a good, gay-looking place. It was furiously gay indeed yesterday, being the last day of the races, and a mercy it was we did not come, weary and way-worn (as we once intended), into it in the evening, for there was not a corner into which they could have stowed us. We shall be in Aberdeen to-morrow, I think, or Monday at the latest, and shall go out of it, if possible, on Thursday. One day's races (and they begin upon Wednesday)

being, I take it, quite enough for us. I am not sure if we shall diverge at all to Peterhead, our money and our time both running away faster than we expected. At Fort-George we shall sorn upon Morehead,* and borrow money from him too, if very much exhausted.

I got your letter the morning before I left Edinburgh; it prevented me from calling upon you. Your friend Keay† does not live within twelve miles from Perth, so we have not been near him. It is very near Dunkeld, however, through which we mean to return, and then your recommendation (if it have not fallen under the negative prescription), may be of some use to us. Is not Snego, or some such word, the name of his estate? You have given me but a very loose direction to him. You must write to me to Aberdeen (which you may do well enough by Tuesday's post), and let me know how Edinburgh has borne my departure. Call for my sister, too, if you be idle enough, and inform her of my survivance. I shall write to her to-morrow from whatsoever place I may be in. Tell me, too, what you are doing yourself, and how the book comes on. You have a little propensity to despondency and impatience in which my philosophy cannot indulge you. A pretty fellow to be discontented to be sure! Would you more than live? But you must not marry, forsooth! So much the better, for a while yet. In short, a man should always hope and pro-

* John Morehead, a militia officer.

† The father of Jeffrey's future friend, James Keay, *Esq.* of Snaigo.

ject for the future; and then, you know, when he does die, it is only want of time that prevented his prosperity. If Kinnaird had died of this fever, what advantage would he have had over me during his life? and if I die in a year or two, what disadvantage shall I have sustained from my want of fortune and provision for fifty years, which will either provide for themselves or never exist for me? This is Montrose formality, I fancy; for I feel as if it were inspired into me against my will. At any rate, I am determined not to be answerable for it, and hope I shall hear no more of it. Farewell, my dear Bell, and believe that I think of you always with the respect and affection you deserve. That is an equivoque, I believe, though I think not, as there is nothing equivocal in the distinction with which you have always treated me. I mean to meditate a great work during the leisure of this journey; but should like to have a hint or suggestion or two to set me agoing. I do not think I should ever have had the grace to be ashamed of my indolence, of my own accord; but my friends have well nigh persuaded me into a state of horrible remorse, and now I can neither be busy or idle with any comfort. A very delectable dilemma, out of which you must help me. I do not care very much at which side. —Believe me, dear Bell, very sincerely yours.

Saturday.—P.S. If you are lazy, or busy, and do not choose to write to Aberdeen, at the post-office, do at the post-office, Inverness, where I shall be in ten days.

21.—*To Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 20th September 1799.

My dear Bobby—I am happy to tell you that I found Mainie* almost entirely recovered from her late illness, and in every respect a great deal better than I had expected. This is the first chapter, and now I come to myself; and a whole chapter of accidents I have to indite upon that subject, though I am not sure if I shall have the patience to present you with the whole of it. I was roused carefully half an hour before four yesterday morning, and passed two delightful hours in the kitchen waiting for the mail. There was an enormous fire, and a whole houseful of smoke. The waiter was snoring with great vehemency upon one of the dressers, and the deep regular intonation had a very solemn effect, I can assure you, in the obscurity of that Tartarean region, and the melancholy silence of the morning. An innumerable number of rats were trotting and gibbering in one end of the place, and the rain clattered freshly on the windows. The dawn heavily in clouds brought on the day, but not alas the mail; and it was long past five when the guard came galloping into the yard, upon a smoking horse, with all the wet bags lumbering beside him (like Scylla's water dogs) roaring out that the coach was broken down somewhere near Dundee, and commanding another steed to be got ready for his transportation. The noise he made brought out the

* His sister Marion.

other two sleepy wretches that had been waiting like myself for places, and we at length persuaded the heroic champion to order a post-chaise instead of a horse; into which we crammed ourselves all four with a whole mountain of leather bags, that clung about our legs like the entrails of a fat cow, all the rest of the journey. At Kinross, as the morning was very fine, we prevailed with the guard to go on the outside to dry himself, and got on to the ferry about eleven, after encountering various perils and vexations, in the loss of horse shoes and wheel pins, and in a great gap in the road, over which we had to lead the horses and haul the carriage separately. At this place we supplicated our agitator for leave to eat a little breakfast; but he would not stop an instant, and we were obliged to snatch up a roll or two a-piece to gnaw the dry crusts during our passage to keep soul and body together. We got in soon after one, and I have spent my time in eating, drinking, sleeping, and other recreations, down to the present hour. This is the conclusion of my journal you see. Yours is not in such forwardness. But I hope the part of it that has been performed out of my guidance has been prosperous and agreeable. I rather think my return must have been a riddance to you, for I was both dull and ill-tempered during the last days of our travelling, &c.

And now farewell to you, my trusty travelling companion. We shall make another trip together again, I hope, very soon; and, in the meantime, try to make as few trips as possible asunder. I am

persuaded that they are good things both for the mind and the body, and are very amusing, both past, present, and future; which is more than you can say of any other kind of gratification.

Remember me very kindly to Mrs. Morehead, and her children twain, Mrs. B. and all the other members of that illustrious family, to all my friends and acquaintances, and lastly, to the whole human race, rich and poor, friends and foes. Amen.—I am, dear Bob, always most affectionately yours.

22.—*To Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 6th July 1800.

My dear Bob—I am au désespoir at your silence. I beg you would give me some satisfaction, &c.

I have been idle and rather dissipated all this summer. Of late I have had fits of discontent and self-condemnation pretty severely, but I doubt if this will produce anything for a long time to come. The thing, however, will certainly draw to a crisis in a year or two. My ambition and my prudence and indolence will have a pitched battle, and I shall either devote myself to ambition and toil, or lay myself quietly down in obscurity and mediocrity of attainment. I am not sure which of these will promote my happiness the most. I shall regret what I have forfeited, be my decision what it may. The unaspiring life, I believe, has the least positive wretchedness. I have often thought of going to India, but I do not know for what station I should

be qualified, or could qualify myself, and I have almost as little talent for solicitation as you have.

I have been reading Malcolm Laing's new Scotch history. It is of a miserable period, and not the author's fault that it contains little but the disgusting and contemptible quarrels of prelates and presbyteries, and the mean tyrannies of privy councils and commissions. It is written with some spirit, and in a style more precise and forcible, than elegant or correct. There is an elaborate dissertation against your friend Ossian, which will not appear so satisfactory to the reader as it seems to have done to the author. However, my faith (or infidelity rather) has been long inclining to that side. Burns' complete works are also come out; the life I have not read. It is, I believe, by Currie and Roscoe. Some of the songs are enchantingly beautiful, and affect one more than any other species of poetry whatsoever. The facility and rapidity with which he appears to have composed them amaze me. Indeed his whole correspondence (although infected now and then with a silly affectation of sentiment, and some common places of adulation), gives me a higher opinion both of his refinement and real *modesty* of character than anything he had formerly published.

I am become a zealous chemist, and could make experiments if I could afford it, and was not afraid of my eyes. I shall join a society in winter that conducts these things in a very respectable style. I am afraid it will swallow up our *academy*, for which I am sorry. It was the most select and the least

burdensome thing of the kind I was ever concerned with. But amiable licentiousness and want of discipline have extinguished it, or nearly.—Believe me always, dear Bob, most affectionately yours.

23.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 1st October 1800.

My dear John—I am vexed to think that the packet for this month will be gone before this reach it; but I only returned to town last night, and in the hurry of travelling, forgot that the irrevocable day was going by, &c.

It is not a very wise thing I believe to talk to a man of his own situation, or to amuse him with conjectures about it, founded on his own information three months before. You will learn more, I believe, from what I may tell you of myself. First then, we are all well. Secondly, Marion was married in June last, (which I have now announced to you four several times). Thirdly, Mary has another daughter. Fourthly, so has Mrs. Murray; that is to say, she has a child, but it is a son, and its name is Thomas. She was almost dead in the bringing forth of it, but is now so well as to have been returning thanks in church, and to have eaten up all the christening cake, to my great disappointment. Fifthly, I am not married, but desperately in love, and they say engaged; but that you need not believe. Sixthly, I have been making a tour in the north, and have spent all my money. I cannot

count any further, and have not much more to inform you of. Our tour this year was not very extensive, but it was very agreeable. I went with my old travelling companion Bob Morehead, and picked up my friends Horner and Murray on the way. We set out by going to the top of Benlomond, and to the bottom of the Loch; and then passed along Loch Katrine, and Loch Venacher, and Loch Lubnaig, and twenty other lochs I believe, with names as unutterable, and borders as savage, as any you have in America. We came down the Tay to Dundee, and then I scrambled over the sand-hills to St. Andrews, where I have been purifying my mind and body by bathing, and the society of innocent girls, for this last fortnight. You are not acquainted, I believe, with our cousins, the Wilsons of that ancient city. The most learned and corpulent doctor I believe you have seen. He has three daughters, in whom I delighted extremely. The place is swarming with beauties indeed; and what with the idleness, and the innocence of my occupations there, I do not think that a more enchanting fortnight has been passed by man since the fall, &c.

I have been so long exhorted by all my friends to write a book, that I have a great notion that I shall attempt something of that kind in the course of the winter. I have not been able to fix upon any subject yet though; and I am afraid a man is not likely to make a good figure, who writes, not because he has something to say, but who casts about for something to say because he has determined to

write. A law book would probably be of the greatest service to me, but I have neither science, nor patience enough I suspect, to acquire it.—Believe me always, my dear John, very affectionately yours.

24.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 29th November 1800.

My dear John—I have at last a letter of yours to acknowledge, &c.

The first weeks of the session have passed over very heavily. I spent the vacation, though, very delightfully, and this is one reason, I daresay, for the discontent I have felt since. However, I am upon the whole a happy animal, and have more reason to be happy than I have the conscience to confess. It is the want of money, and the want of any security for the future, that plagues me the most. I am beginning almost to grow old now. It is time, at least, that I should bid farewell to the mere levities and carelessness of youth, and enter myself somehow or other upon the *valued file* of men. I have strong propensities to matrimony too, and temptations that I scarcely know how to resist. Yet it is a sad thing to take an amiable girl to starve her, or to sink below that level to which one has been accustomed, and to the manners of which all one's relishes have been formed. You see how full of reflection I have become. I do indeed feel a certain change within me, and look upon the world and my concern with it in a very new light, within these last

six months. You need not trouble yourself, however, to sympathise very painfully with my anxieties. I am on the whole extremely happy, and live in a state of hope that is nearly as good as a state of enjoyment, &c.

Bob Morehead has been in Scotland all this summer, but returns, for the last time, to Oxford, soon after Christmas. He still keeps terms in the Temple, but neither reads nor thinks of law. I do not imagine he will take the trouble to pass, and am sure he will never practise. He has been very poetical of late, and really has a talent and a taste that way that might bring him into notice; but he is as indolent as either you or I, and wants confidence more than either. He will not starve, however, though he should be idle. He has rather a turn for marriage, and is in the meantime one of the happiest persons I know, &c.

Your United States, I am afraid, will not deserve that title long; and that wonderful America, which all the discontented patriots of Europe have been holding out to our envy and admiration, will fall a victim, I think, to the constitutional malady of republics. What with your yellow fever and your party violence, I cannot think your situation very enviable. Jefferson, however, I take to be a very able man, and I imagine the best thing that could happen to you would be his election. The true way to abate political violence is to give it power. It is opposition and disappointment that exasperates to all dangerous excesses; and (except in the single

case of a popular revolution, and a mob that is not under the control of any leaders) the most outrageous patriot will generally become practicable and moderate when he is himself entrusted with the government of the country. I beg you to write to me very soon.—Believe me, my dear John, most affectionately yours.

25.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 3d January 1801.

My dear John—It is only two or three days since I received your letter of the 15th November. I am quite delighted to find that you are not dead, and that there is still a possibility of our meeting again in this world. Your congratulations upon Mainie's marriage appear to me as much out of date, as my wishing you a good new-year would do when you receive this letter. It is an event now of obscure antiquity with us, and no more thought of than the day of their death. One part of your letter, however, is still in good season—that, I mean, which relates to the dullness and stupidity of our house since that separation, &c.

I feel this the more, because, when I am from home I live in a very good society, and find the contrast the greater. I make but little progress—I believe I may say none at all—at the bar; but my reputation, I think, is increasing, and may produce something in time, &c. . . . . To have gone out to practice law in India, would have

suited my inclination and my talents, I believe, extremely well; but the courts there are only open to those who have been called to the bar in England, and it would take me four or five years' study, or attendance at least, to obtain that qualification. There is the same objection to my exchanging the Scotch bar for the English. I have every reason to believe that I should be much more successful at the latter; but it is now too late, I am afraid, to think of it. I have talked occasionally with some West India and Demerara men, who give me a tempting idea of the facility with which money may be made in trade in these countries. I know nothing about trade, to be sure, but they say that is of no consequence, and that a clever man cannot fail of success. I rather conceive myself, that all the craft of a merchant might be learned in the course of a year, so as to enable a man to bring all the mind he had to bear in that direction. I have thought, too, of engaging myself in the study of Oriental literature, and making myself considerable in that way, and of fifty different schemes of literary eminence at home.

Within this little while, however, I will confess to you, these ambitious fancies have lost a good deal of their power over my imagination; and I have accustomed myself to the contemplation of an humbler and more serene sort of felicity. To tell you all in two words, I have serious purposes of marriage, which I should be forced, you see, to abandon, if I were to adopt almost any of the plans

I have hinted at. The poor girl, however, has no more fortune than I; and it would be madness nearly to exchange our empty hands under the present aspect of the constellations. We have agreed to wait for a year at least, to see how things may turn out; and in the meantime I am to be industrious and aspiring in my profession, and she is to study economy and sober-mindedness at home. What do you say to that, my dear John? &c.

Farewell, my dear John, let me hear from you very soon, and always believe me most affectionately yours.

26.—*To Thomas Campbell, Esq.*

Glasgow, 17th March 1801.

Dear Campbell—When I say that I am tempted to write you by this opportunity of Richardson's emigration, I am sensible that I give a reason for it that would have served better as an apology for my silence. He can tell you now in person all that I might otherwise have interested you by writing; and will probably bring you despatches from all the friends of whom you might at another time have been glad to have heard more indirectly from me. At the same time, the idea of his meeting with you so soon, has brought you and your adventures more impressively to my mind; and there seems to be less presumption in the address of an uninvited correspondent, when he makes use of the introduction of a friend. These lines, I think, will be less unwelcome to you, when they are presented by

Richardson's hand, than if they had been delivered to you at the post-office.

I have no news for you, and am not much disposed to trouble you with egotisms or dissertations. When I have said that I take a constant interest in your fame and your happiness, and that I am one of those who do not think that esteem is much impaired, either by distance or silence, I have said almost all I have to say, and should finish my letter if I were much afraid of the bad consequences of repetition. As I do not trouble you often, however, I shall venture to talk on, as if I were assured of your indulgence, and not quite removed from your familiarity. In the first place, I must tell you that I have been envying you all this winter, and that I am afraid the same malignant feeling will be associated with the remembrance of you during the whole summer. I have heard something of your sickness, fatigues, and perplexities, but all that makes no difference in my opinion. The review even of these things is pleasant. They are the deep shades of an animated picture, and make a most brilliant contrast with the stupid and tame uniformity of the life that is lived about me, &c.

I hear something and see something now and then, that satisfies me you are not idle, but I have no distinct knowledge of what you have done or projected. I cannot promise you either assistance or return, but should be flattered with the confidence, that some authentic intelligence upon these subjects, would show you could place in me.

Richardson has promised to write to me now and then in the course of your pilgrimage. May I not expect to see a postscript from you now and then, or a whole letter when he makes you his penman for the occasion?

I wish you a pleasant and safe journey, and have no doubt, indeed, that your expedition will be both instructive and delightful. You will be quite naturalized in Germany by the time it is finished; but you run no risk of being *alienated* here. By what I can judge and feel, I think you would be in no danger of being forgotten, either by your friends or the public, though you should be absent and silent for a much longer time than you speak of. Poor Miss Graham, you will have heard, is gone at last. Her sister has just had another child, and is quite well again. Her brother, I suppose, will write to you by this opportunity. I should be extremely gratified if this should prove the beginning of a correspondence in which I can engage for nothing but regularity; but I make no proposals, and indulge no expectations. You will allow me always to admire your abilities, and to rejoice in your happiness and reputation; and believe that I am, dear Campbell, very sincerely yours.

27.—*To George J. Bell, Esq.*

St. Andrews, 19th April 1801.

Dear Bell—I called for you the night before I left Edinburgh, and you called for me; yet I should

not have believed that our meeting was prevented by any *express fatality*, if the same thing had not happened a few evenings before, and if I had not gone four times to my room since I came here with the determination of writing you, &c.

It is as well to tell you in the beginning that I have nothing to tell you, and that you need not waste your patience in reading this letter, if you have as many serious uses for it as you used to have. I am very happy here, and very idle. You are very happy, *I hope, too;* but I am afraid you are very busy. It makes me a little ashamed of my own idleness, and I daresay makes you despise it. That is unchristian, however, and perhaps not very wise; for you labour only in order to be idle, and if I can reap without sowing, I consider it a great gain. You will say that I neglect the seed time; but if I have reasonable doubts both of the climate and of the soil, do I not rather avoid an unprofitable waste? In the meantime I am not so *blameably* happy as I was the last time I was here. You acquitted me then rather more easily than I could prevail on my conscience to do. At present I defy you both, and look fierce and erect upon fortune.

It is fine airy weather, with calm evenings, and buds and flowers in abundance. We cannot boast of our groves indeed; but we have rocks and level roads at their feet, and yellow sunshine upon sails, and girls upon the links, and skate, cod, and mussels in great profusion. Will not this tempt you for a week from your bankrupts? There is a great lack

of men, and you will be of more consequence here than the Lord Justice Clerk at any of his circuit dinners. They talk of balls next week too, and they have concerts already, and there are some learned men, and a good assortment of quizzes, and not one being to put you in mind of the Parliament House, except Walter Cook,* and the black robes of the professors. James Reddie and you gave each half a promise to come and see the beauties while I was here to point them out to you. That is a whole promise between you, so that one of you must come at any rate. I want to know what you are doing, and how Edinburgh subsisteth in my absence.

You are one of the people that put me out of humour with myself, and make me think ill of my industry, and my fitness to live. Yet I do not hate you. There is still some hope of my redemption; and I am always, dear Bell, most sincerely yours.

28.—*To Mr. John Jeffery.*

St. Andrews, 1st August 1801.

My dear John—If you have got any of my last letters you will not be surprised to see me here. I am not going to be married yet, however, and shall write you another letter or two from Edinburgh, I am afraid, before I have that news to communicate. Before the month of November, however, I hope to have renounced all the iniquities and unhap-

* A very respectable Writer to the Signet, and through life a friend of Jeffrey's.

pinesses of a bachelor, and to be deeply skilled in all the comforts of matrimony, before the end of the year. I enter upon the new life with a great deal of faith, love, and fortitude; and not without a reasonable proportion of apprehension and anxiety. I never feared anything for myself, and the excessive carelessness with which I used to look forward when my way was lonely, has increased, I believe, this solicitude for my companion. I am not *very* much afraid of our quarrelling or wearying of each other, but I am not sure how we shall bear poverty; and I am sensible we shall be very poor. I do not make £100 a year, I have told you, by my profession. You would not marry in this situation? and neither would I, if I saw any likelihood of its growing better before I was too old to marry at all; or did not feel the desolation of being in solitude as something worse than any of the inconveniences of poverty. Besides, we trust to Providence, and have hopes of dying before we get into prison, &c.

I wrote my uncle by the packet in June, and communicated to him in a dutiful manner the change I propose to make in my condition. My father says he will probably do something for me on this occasion; but I do not allow myself to entertain any very sanguine expectation. He knows very little about me, and I can easily understand that it may be inconvenient to make any advance at present, which I have no right to receive. I shall certainly never submit to ask, and endeavour to persuade myself that I am above hoping or wishing

very anxiously. Catherine has her love to you. She says I flirt so extravagantly with her sisters, that she is determined to make me jealous of you, if you give her any encouragement. She is a very good girl, but nothing prodigious, and quite enough given to flirtation without any assistance from you.

Farewell, then, my good citizen. I hope we shall see you soon, and see you as we used to do, with all your strength and *beauty* about you. As you are now the only unmarried animal in the genealogy, we propose to treat you with great scorn and indignity as soon as you arrive among us; to put you into a narrow bed, and place you at the lower end of the table, never to wait dinner for you, and to feed you with cold meat, and sour wine. Moreover, we mean to lay grievous taxes on you, and make you stand godfather to all our children. If you give any symptoms of reformation, we may probably relent. If you want a wife (or know anybody who wants one), you must come to this ancient city. There are more beauties than you ever saw anywhere else, among the same number of women; and not more than five or six men, to prevent you from choosing among them.

I bathe, and walk, and sleep, and dream away my time, in the most voluptuous manner; but must rouse myself in a week or two, and go to provide a mansion for myself, before the wintry days come back on us again.

Remember me very affectionately to my uncle.

Take care of yourself, and believe me always most affectionately yours.

29.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 2d October 1801.

My dear John—

. . . . . .

I have told you I am to be married in a month; but the latter days of my courtship have been dismally overclouded. Poor Dr. Wilson* died in the beginning of September, and his family are still in very great affliction. I was fortunately with them at the time, for the scene was really very distressing, and a great deal too much for young gay girls, quite new to affliction, and accustomed to indulge every emotion without any idea of control. Before I arrived, they had been for two days constantly in the sick-room, and would *all* of them sit up every night till they were carried away in a state of insensibility. It is in these ordinary and vulgar calamities of private life, I think, that the most exquisite misery is endured. Campaigns and revolutions are nothing to them. *Their* horrors are covered up, even from the eyes of the sufferer, with smoke and glory; and the greatness of the events help to disguise their wretchedness.

They are all quite well again; and as it was her father's particular request that his death should not put off our marriage beyond the time that had been

* His intended father-in-law.

originally fixed for it, Catherine has readily agreed that it should take place in the beginning of November. I have taken a house in Buccleugh Place for the winter, and mean to set a great example of economy and industry. I have still some fears, however, of dying the death of other great geniuses —by hunger. Catherine is not any richer by her father's death.—My dear John, I am always most affectionately yours.

30.—*To Robert Morehead.*

St. Andrews, 7th October 1801.

My dear Bob—I got your letter yesterday, which was very entertaining; though I could have wished that you had not just kept up the folly to the last, but reformed, and been rational for a few minutes before you bade us farewell. My dear fellow, do you not rejoice at this peace? It is the only public event in my recollection that has given me any lively sensation of pleasure, and I have rejoiced at it as heartily as it is possible for a private man, and one whose own condition is not immediately affected by it, to do. How many parents and children, and sisters and brothers, would that news make happy? How many pairs of bright eyes would weep over that gazette, and wet its brown pages with tears of gratitude and rapture? How many weary wretches will it deliver from camps and hospitals, and restore once more to the comforts of a peaceful and industrious life? What are victories to rejoice at, com-

pared with an event like this? Your bonfires and illuminations are dimmed with blood and with tears, and battle is in itself a great evil, and a subject of general grief and lamentation. The victors are only the least unfortunate, and suffering and death have in general brought us no nearer to tranquillity and happiness. I have really been extremely interested on this occasion, and for four-and-twenty hours thought more, I really believe, of the country than of myself. Catherine is very well however, and I had no cause of any great anxiety or disturbance on my own account. In such a situation a man finds it easy to be philanthropical, and worships the general good without the expense of sacrifice.—Believe me, dear Bob, most affectionately yours.

31.—*To Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 24th May 1802.

My dear Bob—Worse and worse you see, in the way of regularity. This marriage, you think, will interfere with our correspondence; but I cannot think that yet, and would rather have you lay the blame upon circuits and sessions, and, above all, upon new houses and furniture for rooms. We came here, to Queen Street I mean, about ten days ago, and have ever since been in such an uproar with painters, and chimney-sweeps, and packages of old books, and broken china, that I have scarcely had time to eat my dinner, or to find out where my pens and paper were laid till yesterday. Then, you know,

this is the beginning of our session; and, moreover, it is the time of the General Assembly of the Scotch National Church; (you apostate dog! where will you find anything so high sounding as that in your new religion?) And we have parsons and elders by the dozen, with their families, from St. Andrews, to entertain; and I have a cause to plead in the said venerable Assembly, and am to declaim, in the name of a Presbytery, against a poor sinner whom they have accused of profane swearing, and a habit of scoffing at religion, and great levity of behaviour; but I declare to you that I will plead it fairly.

But you are as great a delinquent as I am nearly, —not only to me (for I deserve nothing), but to all your other friends, as I understand, and you cannot have half my apologies. I hope you are quite well, however, and can only suppose that you are busy making your entré into the Church. Are you reverend yet, or not? or is there any chance of your being rejected, or of your changing your mind and drawing back? I do not much like the threat in your last, about not coming to Scotland for this summer, and hope the election will force you for a while among us whether you will or not. If you do not get a curacy immediately, I do not see what you can debate; for I am afraid, after you are once beneficed, you will practise the virtue of residence in a very exemplary manner; and that we shall see each other no oftener than you visit your metropolitan. There is something dolorous in the breaking up of long intimacies, and the permanent separation of

those who have spent so much of their life together. We have spent too much of it together though, I am persuaded, ever to fall off from an intimacy, and shall speak to each other with familiarity, although we should not meet for twenty years to come. I can answer for myself at least, in spite of all the change that marriage is to make upon me. What the Church may work on you, I cannot so positively determine. I met with an old sonnet of yours this morning, on the first fall of snow in December 1794, which brought back to my mind many very pleasing recollections. Indeed, there is no part of my life that I look back upon with so much delight as the summer days we loitered at Herbertshire, in the first year of our acquaintance. I date the beginning of it from the time of your father's death, and often call to mind the serene and innocent seclusion in which we then lived from the world. I should be sorry if I could not live so again, and am sure that I could be as pure, and as careless, and as romantic, if I had only as much leisure, and as pliant a companion.

I have nothing new to tell you of. Our Review has been postponed till September, and I am afraid will not go on with much spirit even then. Perhaps we have omitted the tide that was in our favour. We are bound for a year to the booksellers, and shall drag through that, I suppose, for our own indemnification; but I foresee the likelihood of our being all scattered before another year shall be over, and, of course, the impossibility of going on on the

footing upon which we have begun. Indeed, few things have given me more vexation of late than the prospect of the dissolution of that very pleasant and animated society in which I have spent so much of my time for these last four years, and I am really inclined to be very sad when I look forward to the time when I shall be deserted by all the friends and companions who possessed much of my confidence and esteem. You are translated into England already. Horner goes to the English bar in a year. S. Smith leaves this country for ever about the same time. Hamilton spends his life abroad as soon as his father's death sets him at liberty. Brougham will most probably push into public life, even before a similar event gives him a favourable opportunity. Reddie is lost, and absolutely swallowed up in law Lord Webb leaves us before winter. Jo. Allen goes abroad with Lord Holland immediately. Adam is gone already, and, except Brown and Jo. Murray, I do not think that one of the associates with whom I have speculated and amused myself, will be left with me in the course of eighteen months. It is not easy to form new intimacies, and I know enough of the people among whom I must look for them, to be positive that they will never be worthy of their predecessors. Comfort me, then, my dear Bobby, in this real affliction, and prove to me, by your example, that separation is not always followed by forgetfulness, and that we may still improve and gladden each other at a distance. My Kitty is quite well, and very rational and amiable. If it were not

for her I should run after my friends, and indulge my inherent spirit of adventure by a new course of exertion. But she is my brother and sister, my father and mother, my Sanscrit, my Sydney, and my right venerable cousin, as old Homer says in Andromache.

I dined at Murrayfield the other day. Write me very soon and tell me what you are doing and meditating, and especially when I am to see you again, and how. It is the sweetest weather in the world, and all are in ecstacy with our prospect, and our evening walks. Remember our number is 62. I see no new books of any consequence, and am sadly behind with my task for the Review. I have been more impeded by the law than I had reckoned upon. Cath. sends her love to you, and hopes you will bring her a pair of gloves when you come down. She is going to Herbertshire, she says, some time this autumn.—Believe me always, my dear Bob, yours most affectionately.

32.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 1st August 1802.

My dear John—I am sorry to fall back into the old style; but it is necessary to tell you that your letter of the 11th May is still the latest we have received from you, &c.

We are all here in our usual way. How often shall I repeat that apology for all intelligence? and how infallibly does it come to be less true, upon

every repetition! The little changes, which do not seem to impair its accuracy, accumulate so fast in a few years of absence, that *our usual way* comes to be something very different from our old one. Marriage itself implies a great number of little changes; and it is probable you may think me a good deal altered, while I am unconscious of any other alteration, &c.

It has been a cold wet summer with us, and we predict another scarcity. Speculate upon that, Mr. Merchant, and come over with your cargo. I am going to write a book upon law next year—though, upon my honour, I do not know upon what subject. Everybody exhorts me to do it, and I am too polite to resist the entreaties of my friends, and too modest to set my own conviction of my inability against their unanimous opinion. I must have more money, that is the truth of it, and this will be an experiment to catch some.—Believe me always, dear John, most affectionately yours.

33.—*To Robert Morehead.*

Edinburgh, 25th October 1802.

My dear Bob—You may imagine with what anguish I sit down to tell you that our sweet little boy died this morning about five o'clock. He was seized in the evening with a sort of convulsion and fainting fits, and expired at the time I have mentioned.

Mrs. J. is better than I could have expected, con-

sidering the weak state of her health, the suddenness of this calamity, and the affection with which she doted on the baby that had cost her so dearly.

We are still distracted with a thousand agonising recollections, but I hope by and bye to be more composed.—Believe me always, dear Bob, most affectionately yours.

34.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 1st April 1803.

My dear Horner—I daresay the sight of my handwriting is as terrible to you as that on the wall was to Belshazzar; and it is just as well to tell you in the beginning that I do write principally for the purpose of dunning you. I have some right to dun too; not merely because I am the master, to whom your service is due, but because I have myself sent *fifty* pages to the press before I ask you for one. Hear now our state, and consider:—Brown has been dying with *influenza*, and is forbidden to write for his chest's sake. De Puis* is dying with asthma, and is forbidden to write for his life's sake. Brougham is roaming the streets with the sons of Belial, or correcting his colonial proofs, and trusting everything to the exertions of the last week, and the contributions of the unfledged goslings who gabble under his wings. Elmsley—even the sage and staid Elmsley—has solicited to be set free from his engagements. And Timothy† refuses to come

* A nickname for Dr. John Thomson. † Mr. Thomas Thomson.

under any engagements with the greatest candour and good nature in the world. Now, if you two fail utterly, I shall be tempted to despair of the republic. I would not have you comfort your indolence, however, with this despair. If you will send us thirty pages between you, I shall undertake for its salvation, at least for this campaign. And even if you do not, I am afraid we shall not die nobly, but live pitifully, which will be much worse. Trash will be collected, and I shall have the pleasure of marching in the van of Mr. ——, and Mr. ——, and Dr. ——, and Mr. ——, and I do not know who, that are ready to take your places beside me. Now, my good Horner, let me conjure you "by the consonancy of our studies," and all other serious considerations, to deliver me from this evil; and refuse one dinner, or shorten two nights' sleep, or encounter some other petty evil, to save us from this perplexity. You have many fair days before you to shine and sport in, and may be glad sometime to remember the exertions I ask of you, &c.

I hear of your talking about dung,* and of your making a great deal of money. Good. I wish you would let me into the secret. Remember me to Murray, whom I miss very much, and to Brougham. This place is in a state of terrible depopulation, quoad me at least. Do you hear anything of Hamilton? I daresay these alarms will send him home, or at least the Sanscrit books, which are still more precious to him than his own person.

* In an appeal in the House of Lords.

God bless you Horner. When I am out of humour with my own lot, I generally wish to be you. Do not forget me, however; and we shall continue very good friends and rivals no doubt, though you have the vantage ground.—I am, always very faithfully yours.

P.S.—The *wig* arrived in great order, and I am resolved to mount it boldly next session.

35.—*To Francis Horner.*

Edinburgh, 11th May 1803.

My dear Horner—You will think it but an ill omen of our correspondence that I have left your first letter so long unanswered, but it came when I was doubly from home, for I was not in Glasgow when it arrived, and I have been in a constant state of hurry and agitation ever since I received it. I had reviews to write, and felons to defend, visits to pay, and journeys to perform, directions to give, and quarrels to make up—and all this without one interval of domestic tranquillity, but under strange roofs, where paper and pens were often as hard to be met with as leisure and solitude were always. I only came home last night, and as the session begins tomorrow, I think I do your epistle great honour in taking notice of it so soon. By this time I suppose the third number of the Review will have reached you, and I begin already to feel some impatience for your own opinion of its merits, and your account of

its reception in London. If you are disposed to be very severe, I shall probably remind you that it is your own fault that it is no better, and that you are more responsible for our blunders than those substitutes of yours by whom they were committed. Do not imagine, however, that I was not very much moved with your contrition and conscientious qualms. I would grant you a fuller remission, if I were not afraid that the easiness of your penance might tempt you to a second transgression. To say the truth, I had not much expectation from the very eloquent and urgent expostulation I addressed to you, and had made up my mind to go on without you before it was sent away. This time, however, we really depend upon you; and, after your engagements and blushes, I shall be obliged to suspect that you are not to be depended upon at all if you disappoint us. That you may have an opportunity of exercising your sagacity, I shall let you guess at the authors of the different articles before I disclose them; and that you may give the London opinion without bias or prepossession, I shall not tell you till I hear it, what that is which preponderates in Edinburgh. There is much judgment, I beg leave to assure you, in this specimen of *reticence*, whatever you may think of its eloquence.

There is one thing, however, that I will tell you. In consequence of a negotiation conducted by Smith during my absence, Constable and Longman have agreed to give £50 a number to the editor, and to pay £10 a sheet for all the contributions which the

said editor shall think worth the money. The terms are, as Mr. Longman says, "without precedent;" but the success of the work is not less so, and I am persuaded that if the money be well applied, it will be no difficult matter to ensure its continuance. Now my sage councillor, this editorship will be offered to me in the course of a few days, and, though I shall not give any definite answer till I hear from you, and consult with some of my other friends, I will confess that I am disposed to accept of it. There are *pros* and *cons* in the case no doubt. What the *pros* are I need not tell you. £300 a-year is a monstrous bribe to a man in my situation. The *cons* are—vexation and trouble, interference with professional employment and character, and risk of general degradation. The first I have had some little experience of, and am not afraid for. The second, upon a fair consideration, I am persuaded I ought to risk. It will be long before I make £300 more than I now do by my profession, and by far the greater part of the employment I have will remain with me, I know, in spite of anything of this sort. The character and success of the work, and the liberality of the allowance, are not to be disregarded. But what influences me the most is, that I engaged in it at first gratuitously, along with a set of men whose character and situation in life must command the respect of the multitude, and that I hope to go on with it as a matter of emolument along with the same associates. All the men here will take their ten guineas I find, and, under the

sanction of that example, I think I may take my editor's salary also without being supposed to have suffered any degradation. It would be easy to say a great deal on this subject, but the sum of it, I believe, is here, and you will understand me as well as if I had been more eloquent. I would undoubtedly prefer making the same sum by my profession; but I really want the money, and think that I may take it this way, without compromising either my honour or my future interest. Tell me fairly what you think of it. Murray thinks a little too much like a man at his ease. I should probably think like him if I were in his situation; but my poverty is greater than either of you imagine, and my prospects a great deal more uncertain than your partiality will believe. I have weighed this deliberately. Whatever you think of this matter, there is one service you can do us, I daresay. Enquire and look about among the literary men and professed writers of the metropolis, and send us down a list of a few that you think worth ten guineas a sheet, and that will work conscientiously for the money. Take what measures you can also, to let it be generally known among that race of beings, that for superior articles we give such a price. A classical man of taste in particular, is much wanted, fit for a reviewer of Gifford's Juvenal for instance, and such things. When these weighty matters are settled, I shall write you a letter of anecdotes more at my ease. Let me hear from you very soon; and believe me always, my dear Horner, very faithfully yours.

P.S.—Tell me what books you are to do for No. 4, and what you think ought to be done; and begin to your task, let me entreat you, in good time. You shall have twelve guineas if you please.

P.S.—Thomson hesitates about *Dumont.* Say positively whether you will do it yourself or not.

36.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 2d July 1803.

My dear John—It will be a sad thing if your reformation be the cause of my falling off; yet it is certain that since you have begun to write oftener, my letters have begun to be more irregular, &c.

I am glad you have got our Review, and that you like it. Your partiality to my articles is a singular proof of your judgment. In No. 3, I do Gentz, Hayley's Cowper, Sir J. Sinclair, and Thelwall. In No. 4, which is now printing, I have Miss Baillie's Plays, Comparative View of Geology, Lady Mary Wortley, and some little ones. I do not think you know any of my associates. There is the sage Horner however, whom you have seen, and who has gone to the English bar with the resolution of being Lord Chancellor; Brougham, a great mathematician, who has just published a book upon the Colonial Policy of Europe, which all you Americans should read; Rev. Sydney Smith, and P. Elmsley, two learned Oxonian priests, full of jokes and erudition; my excellent little Sanscrit Hamilton, who is also in the hands of Bonaparte at Fontainebleau; Thomas

Thomson and John Murray, two ingenious advocates; and some dozen of occasional contributors, among whom, the most illustrious, I think, are young Watt of Birmingham, and Davy of the Royal Institution. We sell 2500 copies already, and hope to do double that in six months, if we are puffed enough. I wish you could try if you can *répandre* us upon your continent, and use what interest you can with the literati, or rather with the booksellers of New York and Philadelphia. I believe I have not told you that the concern has now become to be of some emolument. After the fourth number the publishers are to pay the writers no less than *ten guineas* a-sheet, which is three times what was ever paid before for such a work, and to allow £50 a number to an editor. I shall have the offer of that first, I believe, and I think I shall take it, with the full power of laying it down whenever I think proper. The publication is in the highest degree respectable as yet, as there are none but gentlemen connected with it. If it ever sink into the state of an ordinary bookseller's journal I have done with it.

We are all in great horror about the war here, though not half so much afraid as we ought to be. For my part I am often in absolute despair, and wish I were fairly piked, and done with it. It is most clearly and unequivocally a war of our own seeking, and an offensive war upon our part, though we have no means of offending. The consular proceedings are certainly very outrageous and provoking, and, if we had power to humble *him*, I rather

think we have had provocation enough to do it. But with our means, and in the present state and temper of Europe, I own it appears to me like insanity. There is but one ground upon which our conduct can be justified. If we are perfectly certain that France is to go to war with us, and will infallibly take some opportunity to do it with greater advantage in a year or two, there may be some prudence in being beforehand with her, and open the unequal contest in our own way. While men are mortal, and the fortunes of nations variable, however, it seems ridiculous to talk of absolute certainty for the future; and we ensure a present evil, with the magnitude of which we are only beginning to be acquainted. In the meantime we must all turn out, I fancy, and do our best. There is a corps of riflemen raising, in which I shall probably have a company. I hate the business of war, and despise the parade of it; but we must submit to both for a while. I am happy to observe that there is little of that boyish prating about uniforms, and strutting in helmets, that distinguished our former arming. We look sulky now, and manful, I think, &c.—Always, dear John, very affectionately yours.

37.—*To George J. Bell, Esq.*

St. Andrews, 7th August 1803.

My dear Bell—I wish you were here to learn how to be idle, or to teach me how to be busy. We are in the middle of eating and drinking, and are

so much engrossed with it, that, with the most virtuous dispositions in the world, I have barely been able to write a few lines to my father (at three sittings), and to read a half of the Tale of a Tub, &c.

In spite of all this, and in spite of the rainy weather, which has annoyed us ever since we set foot upon this kingdom, we are all in good health. Kate, I think, really stouter, and more uniformly alert than she has been for a very long time. This she desires you to tell Charles, for whose conversation she has a much higher esteem than for his bottles.

For my own part I am perfectly well, and succeed very tolerably in my endeavours to forget that I have reviews to write, and Frenchmen to conquer, in the course of a few weeks. The last evil indeed seems to enter but little into the imagination of anybody I meet with. It is a fashion here to laugh at the notion of an invasion, and I am ridiculed as a visionary for hinting something as to its possibility. They are so much in earnest in this notion, however, that there is not a volunteer or a musket from the Tay to the Forth; and a corporal's guard, I verily believe, might march triumphantly from one end of the country to the other. A privateer, with thirty men, I am quite certain, might land here and carry off all the cattle and women without the smallest danger. I am not quite so well assured, however, by all this confidence, but that I have some anxiety to know what you are doing in Edinburgh as to your armaments and preparations.

What has become of our corps? and have you entered into any other? Have any steps been taken as to the formation of the army of reserve? or anything been done about the general levy? We hear nothing in this corner any more than if we were at St. Kilda. There is but one Scotch newspaper comes to the whole town, and they read it so slow, that its contents are not generally known till four days after its arrival. Tell me too what you hear of our Review. The College takes one copy of it too, but they do not commonly cut up the *learned* articles, and content themselves with our politics and poetry, &c.

Farewell, dear Bell, I hope you never suspect me of forgetting all that I have long owed to your unwearied and disinterested friendship. You think, I can perceive, that I am apt to be led away by idle and profligate associates; but, if I do not overrate my own steadiness, I am in no great danger from that kind of seduction. I will go a certain length, out of curiosity, and by way of experiment, but I hope I can stop where I have determined to stop, and am sure that I recur always with more satisfaction to the tried and substantial merits of my oldest friends. This sentence must be inspired, I suppose; at least I do not know how else it got in.

Write me very soon, my dear Bell, and believe me always very faithfully yours.

38.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

St. Andrews, 8th August 1803.

My dear Horner—From this place of leisure you will expect a long collected letter, but my wits are so besotted with the epidemic eating and drinking of the place, and my hand so disused to writing, that I feel as if it were impossible for me to get over the leaf with you.

I came here a week ago with the resolution to study very hard; and yet, in spite of many vigorous and reiterated endeavours, I have been able to do nothing but read the Tale of a Tub, and answer six cards of invitation. My conscientious qualms, too, are daily becoming less importunate, and unless you will flap me up to something like exertion, I think it very likely that in another week I shall have forgotten that I have reviews to write, and Frenchmen to slaughter. It is impossible, indeed, to be in a situation more favourable for that last act of oblivion. There is not an armed man in the whole county, and a single privateer might carry off all the fat cattle and fair women of the district. To me, who make it a point of conscience to believe in an invasion, this negligence is perfectly shocking. Our Review came out, though, after a very hard labour, on the regular day; and is by this time, I have no doubt, in your hands. It is my business to receive opinions you know, and not to offer any. I am much afraid, however, that your "Lord King" is the best article in the number; and you will think some of

the most laborious very bad. I am impatient to hear what you think, and also what you hear. If we begin to sink in general estimation at this crisis, we shall speedily go to the bottom, &c.

I am quite inconsolable at the departure of the Smiths. They leave Edinburgh, I believe, this day, and they leave nobody in it whom I could not have spared more easily. There has been a sad breaking up of the society in which we used to live so pleasantly; Hamilton, and Horner, and Allen, and now the Smiths. I hope we shall meet somewhere again, though I despair of seeing those careless and cordial hours that we have formerly spent together. In Heaven it will be quite another sort of thing, I am told. However, let us write to each other, and keep away the approaches of strangeness as long as possible. Brougham talks of emigrating also, and then I shall have nobody but Murray, whom I admire and esteem more every day. I see nobody who has such good manners, and good dispositions, &c.

Let me know, my dear Horner, how you proceed, and how soon you will be able to patronise me. As soon as you are Chancellor, I am resolved to cringe to you for a place. Tell me something about your society, and give me some more of those sage advices as to my conduct, from which I used to receive so much benefit and delight. It was announced last night in the Club that Lord Webb was to pass next winter in Edinburgh; I hope you will confirm this, and send him down fully convinced that, without being a member of the said club, it is

impossible to have any tolerable existence in Edinburgh. Do not forget your promise of recruiting for us. We shall want journeymen for a third, and sometimes for a half, of each number, and I suspect they may be got better in town than anywhere else. I wish we could get a rational classic, and get that part of the journal done in a superior style. I long for the sheet of politics you promised me, and am beginning to have some curiosity to know what is to become of the world.—Believe me, &c.

39.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 2d September 1803.

My dear Horner—My last letter crossed yours on the road, and of course made it a delicate question which of us was in duty bound to write again. While I was at St. Andrews, the genius loci confined me to eating and drinking, but now I have awakened from my dream, and the cares and anxieties of my editorial functions begin to come thick upon me again. I have unfortunately two or three law papers to write, and am so miserably provided with books for reviewing, that I am afraid my quota will be smaller this time than ever. Now that we are paid for our work, I feel a greater delicacy in laying hold of any long article for myself, and should be perfectly satisfied, if those who do lay hold of them, would execute them according to engagement. Thomson has done nothing yet to Dumont, &c.

You see then how destitute I am, and you see

the meaning of all this. It is that you must do a great deal yourself, and do it quickly. You have some very good books, and you will never have so good a time for working. Now, my dear Horner, do not take these for verba solemnia of my official dunning. I am in profound earnest, and most serious perplexity. You must not only work yourself for us, but you must set on the rest. Tell Smith we cannot do without him. We shall have no light articles at all, if he deserts us. Do stir up Peter Elmsley moreover, and tell him that he promised to let me have something. Both of these culprits have concealed their addresses from me. Let me know where to find them, and I shall persecute them in person. You are sick of reviewing, I dare-say. So am I, but I have very little else to say to you. I heard and saw so little at St. Andrews, that I feel now like one of the seven sleepers on his return to the world. The world of Edinburgh is very empty at present, and Smith and Elmsley will have told you, at any rate, all those parts of its history which could give you any pleasure. I am quite inconsolable for the loss of Smith, and cannot pass by his door without murmuring. I hope you see him often. Tell him to write me soon, and often. If I knew his address, I should have been complaining to him already. Murray is still unwell, &c.

My dear Horner—This doctor* will never do. I wish you would explain to me how he is endured

* Addington, Prime Minister.

in London, and what his friends say of his late doings, &c. Tell me what is said and expected among your wise people, if there be ten left in your absurd city.

40.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 8th September 1803.

My dear Horner—Your letter is one degree too dignified, and the expostulation a little too harsh. I care very little about the Review, and, though I am not going to give it up in a pet, I would much rather give it up altogether than give any one person a pretext for saying that I selected the most important or the easiest articles for myself. Perhaps the editor should not have been a writer at all. However, I hasten to appease you by saying that I have got back Millar, and shall try what can be done with him, though it is a subject I do not very much like. I may now mention to you that Thomson and I agreed to propose it to Cranstoun,* of whose writing powers all his friends speak very highly, but he declines for the present taking any concern in our business. Was this very weak and unreasonable, O! most relentless Censor? or a reason for threatening to desert us? thou iron-hearted man.

Wednesday 14th—I had written this length on the morning I received your letter, when I was suddenly called to the country by Mrs. J.'s illness. She is now almost entirely recovered, and came here

* George Cranstoun, afterwards Lord Corehouse—a judge.

with me last night. I proceed now with my answer. May I *entreat* you now to do Malthus, if possible, for this number? You seem to treat me a little too much like a common dun, and to fancy that there is something very unreasonable in my proposing anything that is to give you trouble, or cost you a little exertion. I know that writing reviews is not very pleasant to either of us; but if I feel the burden pressing very heavy on myself, is it not natural for me to ask some assistance from one who is so willing to bear his share of it? I hope you do not imagine that I have made a *trade* of this editorship, or that I have, upon the whole, any interest in the publication that is essentially different from yours, or Smith's, or that of any of our original associates. The main object of every one of us, I understand to be, our own amusement and improvement—joined with the gratification of some personal, and some national, vanity. The pecuniary interest I take to be a very subordinate consideration to us all, and beg leave, for myself, to say that it shall never bind me for an hour to this undertaking after it comes to be, as you express it, altogether on a different footing from what it was in the beginning. When I am deserted by my old associates I give up the concern; and while they are willing to support it, I shall feel myself entitled to pester them with the story of our perplexities, and to make them bear, if possible, their full share of my anxieties.

I do not know, my dear Horner, why I should write all this, or why I should feel myself growing

angry and indignant as I advance farther into this subject. I have a right, I hope, to ask you to write for us; and you have a right, no doubt, to excuse yourself, and to make your own apologies; but do not, if you please, announce to me so formally what "you wish to be understood" on the subject of your contributions, nor fancy that I am to take your orders as if I were a shopman of Constable's. Forgive me for this want of temper. Brougham and I shall write our full proportion for this number; Murray, I hope, more than he has yet done, and T. Thomson also. If you fall off, therefore, it will not be by our example, but in spite of it. We shall be much at a loss for light sheet articles, unless Smith consents to exert himself. I shall write to him to-morrow or next day; but am at this moment so much engaged with law papers that I have scarcely a moment to spare for anything else. I beg you to give me some notice of Elmsley if you will not submit to dun him yourself by my deputation.

My dear Horner, you have no need to be anxious about your professional destiny, and before you are called to the bar you will have time enough to lay in your law, even though you should steal a day or two in the quarter to write reviews. I have no news for you. I have not seen Brougham since my return here. Murray is well again, and goes to the country to-morrow for a week, to recruit. I am in daily expectation of the letter you promise me in your last, and of much illumination on the state of affairs and parties in your city. De Puis goes to

London to-morrow, I believe. He is a good creature. Are there no tidings yet of Allen?

41.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 19th October 1803.

My dear Horner—I have got your letter, but not the packet. It will come to-morrow, I suppose, as it is a fast day, on which no work can be done. Why do you only give me one article? and that only fifteen pages! You might at least have added Sir John Sinclair's. But, as you have one scolding epistle of mine on hand already, and as another will do neither of us any good, I intermit my wrath. You are right about the catalogue. It shall be a mere list; but then it will not fill a sheet, and I must scribble to fill up the deficiency, for there is not another soul that will make any exertion. After all, I believe we shall get out within a day after our proper time, though what sort of figure we are to make, I really have not leisure to conjecture. P. Elmsley has sent a sheetful of Greek upon Athenæus. We have no mathematics at all. I write chiefly to tell you about ——. He has no objection to Wishaw undertaking his book, and I, of course, am extremely pleased to get rid of so delicate an engagement. Is it intended to be done in the manner of an analysis? If not, take care and do not let your friend laud too much. The author's connexion with us of course must be avoided. But a reviewer, who is not one of us, may require to be

reminded of the sternness and severity that this requires. I beg you would spare no urgency, and lose no time, in endeavouring to engage so respectable an associate. If we could once dip him in our ink, I think we should have something like a hold on him. I hope we shall never again get into such a scrape as we are just coming out of (and that not without damage, I fear). But we shall never get on comfortably unless we enlarge our phalanx by the association of two or three new recruits. For next number I have not much apprehension; you must do a great deal (after that I shall never urge you beyond your convenience), and Smith, I daresay, will not be idle. I scarcely know, however, what we shall have to put in it. Walter Scott has, in a manner, offered to do Godwin's Life of Chaucer; and as he understands the subject, and hates the author, I have a notion he will make a good article of it. We must abate something of our general asperity; but I think we should make one or two examples of great delinquents in every number, &c.

There is no news, and I have no leisure to prattle to you. All we reviewers are getting our heads modelled by Henning, and propose to send him to London to complete the series, by the addition of your vast eyebrows. I am still in despair for the country, and mean to fast and pray to-morrow as powerfully as possible.

Brougham and Murray and I are rather awkwardly situated as to our military functions. We

have two offers now at avizandum, to officer a battalion of pioneers, or one of the additional companies of the county volunteers; neither of which corps, however, are yet raised, &c.—God bless you, dear Horner, ever very truly yours.

42.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 19th February 1804.

My dear Horner—

I think your sensibilities about Stewart somewhat too nice.* I have only joined his name with Condorcet's in reference to a subject on which he himself quotes that author; but I will alter much more than that to give you satisfaction. I readily agree with you that the article might have been made better; but I cannot think that the subject afforded an opportunity for a *very* good one. I am very nearly in earnest in all I have said, and admit only a certain degree of inaccuracy, which could not have been well avoided, without making the doctrine less popular and comprehensible. I cannot help thinking that there is some value in my view of the limitation of metaphysical discoveries, and I will take any wager you please, that when we are both eighty, you will be very much of my opinion.

I am afraid I shall disappoint you in another article. I mean Dumont. Thomson has at last

* An article by Jeffrey on one of Dugald Stewart's Works.

positively declined doing him, and sent him back to me only three days ago. I have read a volume, and I am sorry to say that I have already a very decided opinion as to the merits of the system. The book is written with great acuteness, and the doctrine is for the most part substantially good; but for novelty or discovery, I can see nothing that in the least resembles it. A great deal of labour is bestowed in making useless distinctions, and imperfect catalogues of things that never were either overlooked or mistaken by reasonable men. However, you need not be afraid of my rashness, I shall read the book twice over, and treat the man with all imaginable respect, &c.—Believe me always, di vostra vecchiezza devotissimo servitore.

43.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 6th May 1804.

My dear Horner—I do not know whether the few lines I sent you from York, will be allowed to give me a legal dispensation from the promise of writing, immediately after my arrival in Scotland. I got here, however, on Friday morning, and slept all that forenoon. On Saturday morning I thought it my duty to go to the drill; and to-day I am afraid I have put off so much of the morning in idleness, that there is but little chance of this being ready for the post till to-morrow.

I have nothing to tell you of my journey, which was prosperous and sleepy. Mrs. J., I am happy to

say, I found in much better health than when I left her; and my table not so encumbered with papers as to make me despair of clearing it before the beginning of the session, &c.

So much for the res familiares. The res publicæ, I am afraid, will not be discussed so easily. Happening to be long in bed yesterday, I found myself under the necessity of giving audience in that dignified posture to Constable & Co., who came dutifully to offer their congratulation, and to receive their orders, on my return. The cry is still for copy. We must publish, it seems, by the 15th of July, to attain the object for which we went back to the 18th; and they wish, if possible, to set the press agoing in the course of ten days from this time. Now, my most trusted and perfidious Horner, I earnestly conjure you to think how necessary it is for you to set instantly about Malthus. Shut yourself up within your double doors; commit the doctor for one eight days to his destiny; and cease to perplex yourself with "what the Dutch intend, and what the French;" let the blue stockings of Miss —— be gartered by some idler hand; resist, if possible, the seductions of Mrs. Smith, and the tender prattlings of Saba; think only of the task which you have undertaken, and endeavour to work out your liberation in as short a time as possible. I do think it of consequence that we should begin, if possible, with this article, both because it is more important, and more impatiently expected than any other, and because I really do not know of any

other that I have a right to demand, or the power of getting ready so soon, &c.

The bibliopoles confided to me another great plan, in which I since find that most of our friends have been embarked with great eagerness. It is no less than writing and publishing an entire new Encyclopædia, upon an improved plan. Stewart, I understand, is to lend his name, and to write the preliminary discourse, besides other articles. Playfair is to superintend the mathematical department, and Robison the natural philosophy. Thomas Thomson is extremely zealous in the cause. W. Scott has embraced it with great affection; and W. Clerk, Cranstoun, and Erskine, have all agreed to contribute everything that they possibly can do to its success. Coventry, Leslie, and that excellent worker Stevenson, are also to be employed in the redaction; and English assistance is to be solicited as soon as the scheme can be brought to any maturity. We hope to have your assistance also. The authors are to be paid at least as well as the reviewers, and are to be allowed to retain the copyright of their articles for separate publication, if they think proper. You will understand that all this is only talked of as yet; but from the way in which it is talked of, I rather think it will be attempted. I should have given you more particulars, if I had been able to meet with Thomson, but he is still in the country, and I have only gathered these cuttings from Constable and W. Scott.

44.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 3d September 1804.

Dear Horner—I have intended to answer your letter every day this week, and I am sure that you will believe that I am in earnest when I inform you that I have risen at seven o'clock this morning to make myself sure of an opportunity. I have nothing to say to you, however, except just to dun and press as usual. I am amused with your audacity in imputing fastidiousness to me. I am almost as great an admirer as Sharpe. The only difference is, that I have a sort of consciousness that admirers are ridiculous, and therefore I laugh at almost everything I admire, or at least let people laugh at it without contradiction. You must be in earnest when you approve, and have yet to learn that everything has a respectable, and a deridable aspect. I meant no contempt to Wordsworth by putting him at the head of the poetical firm. I classed him with Southey and Coleridge who were partners once, and have never advertised their secession. We shall be overwhelmed with poetry. Scott's Lay is in the press too, and will be out by November. There is a set here as much infatuated about it, as you were with Mackintosh. W. Erskine recited me half a canto last night, which he says is inimitable; and I acquiesced with a much better grace I am sure than you did to Sharpe's raptures upon Wordsworth. I am only afraid that they have persuaded Scott into the same opinion, and that the voice of impartiality

will sound to him like malignity or envy. There is no help—justice must be done, and I, like the executioner, shall kiss him, and whirl him off, if the sentence be against him. I rather think though that he will be acquitted. Talking of poets, I have a desponding epistle from poor Campbell, in which he says that his health is bad, and that his spirits are worn down by staring all day in a newspaper office. This is lamentable. I wish you would walk to Pimlico, and comfort him. Is it not possible to get something done for him? Wilna was better than a newspaper office. A race-horse is better at grass than in a plough. He has promised some reviews, but I am sceptical as to London promises; and, besides, I doubt very much if his performance will be laudable. I wish you would think though if anything could be done for him in India, Ireland, or anywhere, &c.

Lord Lauderdale is out,* delightfully angry and pert; but I have scarcely read him through. Sir James Hall read a paper two days ago to the Royal Society, and shewed the result of several curious Huttonian experiments. He melted chalk, pounded limestone, spar, and other carbonates, into substances very much resembling native limestone and marble, by a heat not exceeding 22° of Wedgewood. He has also attempted to regenerate coal, and to manufacture coal from saw-dust and horn. He has sent his paper, I understand, to Nicholson; so you

* Out—in a pamphlet in answer to the Review (No. 8, art. 8) on his book upon Public Wealth.

will see it by and bye. I think it very curious. He means to read and publish a more detailed account of the transactions in winter. Poor Alison is very ill. He has been confined to bed for these two months, and Gregory shakes his head about him, though they say he is rather better. Stewart is still in the country, busy I hope with his second volume. Playfair, I fancy, is with you.

The Review comes on very ill, or rather it does not come on at all. I have the mortification to see myself almost deserted, and to feel myself extremely stupid and incapable of any meritorious exertion. I have done Richardson's letters—tediously, I am afraid, and coarsely, and nothing else. I have read Barrow, but scarcely made up my mind about him. I think he is nearly right, but I had always a profound contempt for the Chinese. I suspect I shall fall foul of them. Sir W. Jones I find is very dull and dry. We must be short, &c.

My dear Horner—Will you take compassion upon me, and rise five mornings at seven o'clock, and let me have Malthus to begin with. Upon my honour, I would do that for you, horribly as I detest rising, if it would relieve you half as much as you can do me. These perplexities really take away from my happiness. It would be a very extraordinary, and somewhat of a ridiculous thing, if the work were to be dropped, while it flourishes as it does in sale; and yet, if I do not get more assistance it must drop, or become not worth keeping up. I did not mean to tease you with this, since it only teases you; but I

cannot help begging when I am actually starving, beggar-like as you use me. I missed Davy as he passed here. Indeed, I do not find that he saw anybody but the coterie at Dr. Hope's, though he did me the honour, I find, to call, &c.

Tell me how your politics come on. We never speak of such things here. Indeed, I think we are every day getting more into the style of a secondary provincial town, and losing both our literature, and our good breeding. That is the consequence of having so smooth a road to London, &c. I never pass through York Place without a little pang.*—Ever, dear Horner, most sincerely yours.

45.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 4th September 1804.

My dear Horner—This hot weather makes me bilious, I suppose; for I cannot get fairly to the end of three pages without getting into bad humour—even though I rise in the very cool and blue of the morning to give my blood a fair chance of coolness. But here has been James Brougham, with his placid honest countenance, saying so many flattering and apologetic things of you, that I once more feel myself amiably disposed, and sit down to write to you in a most Christian temper of charity and long suffering.

The most acceptable thing that fell from his persuasive lips was, that you would have no objection to answer Lauderdale's pamphlet, provided it

* Horner lived there.

appeared unfit for reviewing. Now, it is clearly quite unfit for reviewing. In the first place, it is rude and impertinent in many places; and in the second, the review ought never to be made a vehicle of controversy, as it would soon be a vehicle for nothing else. We speak, of course, as judges, and of course must leave the bench when we are compelled to appear as parties. We could not consistently, or even with due regard to our reputation, affect to measure impartially the relative merits of Lord Lauderdale and of the Edinburgh Review, &c. With regard to answering the pamphlet, however, I urgently entreat you to do it, both for Brougham's sake, and also in some degree for your own sake, and the sake of the doctrines contained in that Review, for some of which I own I feel a sort of paternal anxiety. I have had time only to run over the said observations very slightly, but from what I have seen, I think them all very answerable. I am not quite clear about the pensionary and the sinking fund sections, but I have always shivered on the brink of those subjects, without venturing myself into their depths. However, if you will undertake to write an answer, I will engage to send you a few notes on the whole work, of which you shall be welcome to make as little use as you think proper. The pamphlet makes no great fame here, and seems scarcely to be read except by the political auxiliaries of his lordship. However, that is no presumption against it. For if my Lord Lauderdale were to write as prettily as

Ezekiel, the Dundassites would affect to scoff at it, &c.—Ever, my dear Horner, most sincerely yours.

46.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 20th January 1805.

My dear Horner—Your letters are always delightful, and afford me more pleasure than anything else that I read. I wish I deserved them better. But I really have had no time to write, and as you are yourself the chief and most criminal cause of my hurry, I do not think you have any right to impeach me. If you will not write reviews, I cannot write anything else. This number is out, thank heaven, without any assistance from Horner, Brougham, Smith, Brown, Allen, Thomson, or any other of those gallant supporters who voted their blood and treasure for its assistance. Will you, or will you not, do Malthus for April? Is it fair to the Review, or kind to me, or well for yourself, to keep up an article of this kind for so enormous a time? &c.

This fit is over, however, and I go on.

The Edinburgh world does not improve I think. But it does not grow worse. I have great consolation in the club, and a thousand resources in Murray. By the bye, he has been under terrible apprehension of *gout* for this last fortnight. I tell him that his career is at an end, that he shall dance no more, but ought to make up his mind to flannel and thick ankles for the sad residue of his life. I do not think he has anything worse than a slight rheumatism in

his knee; but he is very anxious and full of precautions. Teaze him, if you are idle enough, with a long epistle of condolence, &c. I increase daily in affection for Johnny Playfair. He has given me liberal and friendly assistance in this last number, and with so much cheerfulness and punctuality, that if you have any proper conception of my fury against you, you may have some notion of my gratitude to him.

Murray and I have a plan to make all the respectable part of the bar, who are young enough to be accessible, acquainted with each other, that the good spirit which is in them, and which runs some risk of being corrupted, or quelled, and overawed, when it is single, may be strengthened by communication and union, and give to the body hereafter something of a higher and more independent character than it has lately borne, &c.

My dear Horner—I am still very painfully busy, and having got a bad habit of dining out, I do not see when I am likely to be at leisure again. But I will write to you by and by, when I am out of debt to the agents. In the meantime, let me hear from you frequently, and believe me always, most sincerely yours.

47.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 6th February 1805.

My dear John—

. . . . . .

I was applied to a few weeks ago for a letter of

introduction to you, which I granted with great unwillingness and much sorrow. It was for a Mr. —— and his wife, who have been unfortunate in Glasgow, and are going to try what fortune will do for them in America. I know very little about the man, and it is chiefly for the sake of the wife that I wish you to do them all the good you can. I dare-say you remember her as one of the beauties of Glasgow. Her name was —— ——; and her story is something romantic. She was desperately in love with a youth of the name of ——, who went to India, and died. Her father insisted on her marrying ——, who was then in the way of getting very rich. After the death of her true love she complied, and has been a most exemplary wife, even in this land of domestic virtue. Her husband speculated, and was ruined. For the last year they have been penniless; and the poor girl has subsisted the whole family, in a great measure, by the labour of her own innocent hands; has maintained an heroic cheerfulness and equality of temper; and agreed, without murmuring, to accompany her imprudent husband to a strange country, at a distance from all her friends. There is more magnanimity in this than in speaking blank verse and swallowing laudanum. I have seen very little of her for two years. You will not find her very clever or very accomplished, but she is a generous and noble-hearted woman, and one who deserves every sort of assistance. I beg you would not neglect them, &c.—Ever, my dear John, most affectionately yours.

48.—*To Mrs. Morehead.*

(Soon after his Wife's death.)

Glasgow, 23d August 1805.

My dearest Margaret—I left you chiefly because I could not bear to burden your spirits with the sight of my continual misery. But I hope the movement will do some good to my own also. As yet, however, I cannot say that I feel any relief. The sight of this place naturally reminds me of the last visit I paid to it; when my darling was exulting in the idea of improving health; when I saw her dressed and smiling, and contrasted her innocent raptures on the journey to Inverary; and folded her to my breast with transport, when she told me of the pleasure she received from the praises of her husband's speeches. And this is about three months ago. It is not so much since I saw her sitting affectionately with Mainie* in this very room, and led her across the street; which I cannot look back upon without shuddering. It is impossible for me to tell you how eagerly I seek after these recollections, and how strongly they move me. We had a distant peep of Bothwell Castle from the road yesterday, and it brought to my mind so forcibly the delightful visit we paid there, you remember, more than a year ago, that I could scarcely persuade myself I was not actually looking down on the river, with you on one hand and my Kitty on the other, with nothing but spring, and life, and joy around us.

* His sister, Mrs. Brown.

It was the same when we walked out to Langside last night. You remember when we dined there first, before setting out on the expedition, and I saw my lamb walking stately on the lawn, and sitting in the garden, and looking from every window in the house. You cannot conceive what a relief it was to me, after being in sight of people all day, to lie down on that lawn, and weep my fill for her.

I have nothing to tell you of our adventures. We got here about three o'clock, a good deal jostled, quite well; dined alone, and walked out after dinner to see the children at the cottage. They are both quite well too, and much improved in beauty and understanding. Returned in the dusk; went to bed early; slept a good deal, and rose rather late. I start half the night, as I generally do, in calling to Kitty to appear to me, to let me hear one note of her voice, or to give me some token of her existence and continuing care for me. Sometimes I feel unaccountably calmer after this, and sometimes quite oppressed and desponding. I have seen nobody today but Margaret Lowdon, whose gentleness and unaffected sorrow has soothed me more than anything since I left you, by drawing social tears from me. I think my beloved would have been gratified with the sensibility with which she received her hair, and the little memorials we set aside for her. I hope I have distributed these as she could have wished. The only pleasure I have now upon earth is in doing what I think she would have praised me for. Almost the only pleasure, indeed, I had before,

was in receiving or in anticipating her praises. We are to dine at the College to-day. The exercise of walking to it is of use to me, I think, and there is something soothing in the solitude and quiet of the country. I shall be back with you very soon, my dear Margaret. Mainie is very kind, but, except Margaret Lowdon and herself, there is not a creature here to whom I could bear to name her. You are good and gentle, and indulgent and sincere, both in your sympathy, and in your own sorrow and affection. You always soothe me whenever you speak of her, and by and by, perhaps, I shall not oppress you so much with my regrets. There is one thing, though, which I have been thinking about, Margaret; I will not live with you during your confinement. I perceive that I must crowd and disturb you; and, though your kindness overlooks that, I must not. There is really not room for your mother and nurses, &c.; and, by that time, I am afraid that people might be coming about me that would make the scene still more tumultuous. Besides, my dear love, I am not sure that this might not be too much for me. I have scarcely been able to look on young children with composure for these three years, and in your case the remembrance would be too painful. I have almost determined then to go to my own house, &c.—Ever my best Margaret, most gratefully and affectionately yours.

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49.—*To Charles Bell, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 21st January 1806.

My dear Charles—

. . . . . .

George tells me you began to lecture last Saturday, and I believe I am nearly as impatient as he is to learn the success of your debut. But in a place where there is so much jealousy, and intrigue, and association, there is undoubtedly some risk at the beginning. If you are once fairly launched, you will go on smoothly. I wish you may be simple and plain enough in your lectures. I think I have observed in your writings a certain degree of constraint and finery, which would be much better away, &c.

George is improving in industry, and rising daily in reputation. I know no man whose character is so completely respectable, whose heart is so kind, and whose principles so honourable and steady. A certain degree of constraint in his manners, and a kind of irritability arising from an excessive intolerance for anything mean or unhandsome, have hitherto kept his full value from being generally understood. These, however, are daily diminishing, and as his increasing notoriety brings him more and more into varied and polished society, they will disappear altogether, and make him as great a favourite with his new acquaintances, as he has long been with his intimate friends. It is a kind of ill-breeding, I believe, to talk to you so much of so near a relative;

but I am as proud of his friendship, as you are of your relationship, and cannot refuse myself this gratification.

I am sorry to lose Richardson; he is gentle and kind-hearted, as those from whom you would not hide your weaknesses, nor think it necessary to disguise your affections. I think you will have considerable comfort in his society. There is something domestic and almost feminine in his manners that must be very soothing to one who lives alone in the hardness of male society.

I have heard nothing more from you about the drawing you were kind enough to promise you would again attempt for me, and am afraid you could make nothing of the remarks I sent you in the former. Do not put yourself to any inconvenience, but do not forget, my dear friend, a promise upon which I think hourly. I am very much as I was. My home is terrible to me; and I am a great deal in company. I am gay there, and even extravagant as usual; but I pass sad nights, and have never tasted of *sweet* sleep since my angel slept away in my arms. I did not mean to distress you with this, do not think it necessary to answer it. Your book is coming on, I see, but slowly. It is not perfectly well written, and wants simplicity and precision. There is an art in this which you have not had leisure to study, but I will answer for its success, and its deserving it, &c.

50.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 9th March 1806.

My dear Horner—Though I believe you have still a foolish letter of mine unanswered, I feel ungrateful till I have thanked you for your last long and exemplary one. You must not wonder at my friendship though; for wonder, in your philosophic head, stands pretty near to incredulity; and, besides, if there is to be any wondering in the matter, I suspect it would become me better than you. I have never done you any service, nor, am I afraid, been the occasion of much gratification to you. In my happier days I ran some risk of your contempt, by my levity and unconcern about the great objects of your attention; and lately I have appeared weak and querulous, and have repaid your kind and generous sympathy with something of misanthropy and ingratitude. Yet I do not doubt the least of your friendship, nor does it come into my head to wonder at it. On the contrary, I should wonder very much if it were now to be withdrawn. Your scheme of life is admirable; but when I read it over to Murray, I said you were in more danger of being assailed by competition than you seemed to be aware of. In three days after, I heard that you had been tempted, and had yielded. I congratulate you heartily on your nomination,* and rejoice at it as an earnest of greater honour, and a pledge to yourself and your

* As one of the Commissioners for the liquidation of the Nabob of Arcot's debts.

friends of the estimation you have already obtained with the most discerning and severe judges of merit. In some other points of view, I am not so sure that it is to be rejoiced at. It will interfere, I am afraid, both with your professional advancement, and with your literary and private pursuits; and it has not the splendour, nor the opportunity for display and great public service, which belongs to offices more purely political. If you were not so conscientious, so scrupulous, and so prone to laborious investigation, I should not have so much apprehension. But these unhappy propensities will involve you in infinite labours, and, I am afraid, will enable your new duties to engross an alarming proportion of your time and your exertions. But perhaps I mistake the nature of the office. Tell me more about it when you have leisure to write. I am afraid here is the end of your reviewing, &c.

This leads me to say something of myself. I thank you, my dear Horner, a thousand times, for your unwearied and affectionate solicitude, and for the counsels and expostulations which soothe and gratify me, at least, by their kindness, though I may not be able to comply with them. I can never endure a solitary home, even if it were not a desolated one; nor can I perceive any motive for my encountering all these agonies, that I may come to stupify in dreamy repose, instead of agitating myself with fretful and frivolous occupations. Till my affections can take root again and flourish, I can taste no substantial happiness; and whatever cheats

me of time and recollection most effectually, is now the most eligible course of life I can follow. Do not imagine, however, from anything I may have said to you or Murray, that I spend the whole of my idle hours in turbulent and heartless society, for the mere purpose of distraction. I do that, certainly, rather than spend them alone. But there are several families in which I have a more suitable consolation; simple women, with whom I am intimate, and sweet children, by whom I am beloved, are the great instruments of my dissipation; and you will not easily persuade me that this is not a more wholesome and rational discipline for a mind distempered like mine, than studies without interest, and solitude which exertion could teach me only to endure. Tell me, however, what you would have me to do? and why? I grow every day more familiar with these impressions as to the insignificance of life, and the absurdity of being much concerned about anything that it presents, which have more than once excited your indignation already, so that I am afraid we should not agree very well in our premises. Labour and exertion do infinitely less for our happiness and our virtue than you stern philosophers will allow yourselves to believe; and half the pains and suffering to which we are exposed arise from the mortification of this ridiculous self-importance which is implied in all your heroic toils. This you think spleen and paradox; but it was my creed before I was splenetic, and a creed that conducted me to happiness. And what, my dear

Horner, are all your labours for reputation, and distinction, and the esteem of celebrated persons, but fatiguing pastimes, and expensive preparatives for the indulgence of those affections that are already within your own reach. I do think ambition a folly and a vice, except in a school-boy, and conceive it to be evident that it leads to unhappiness, whether it be gratified or disappointed.—Believe me ever, most affectionately yours.

51.—*To Mrs. Morehead.*

Southampton, 1st September 1806.

My dear Margaret—I got your kind letter at Portsmouth on Thursday, and wrote next day to Bob a pretty full account of our journeyings and adventures up to that date. We have been ever since in the Isle of Wight, which we only left this morning, and I must now give you some further account of our proceedings. The said isle is very well worth visiting, and I have some hope of leading you over its beauties one day when I am rich, and idle, and happy. On the side next the mainland, it is finely wooded, and swelled into smooth hills, and divided by broad friths, and inlets of various and fantastical appearance. But the chief beauty, I think, lies on the south, where it opens to the wide ocean, and meets a warmer sun than shines upon any other spot of our kingdom. On this side, it is, for the most part, bounded by lofty chalk cliffs, which rise, in the most dazzling whiteness, out of the blue sea

into the blue sky, and make a composition something like Wedgewood's enamel. The cliffs are in some places enormously high; from 600 to 700 feet. The beautiful places are either where they sink deep into bays and valleys, opening like a theatre to the sun and the sea, or where there has been a terrace of low land formed at their feet, which stretches under the shelter of that enormous wall, like a rich garden plot, all roughened over with masses of rock, fallen in distant ages, and overshadowed with thickets of myrtle, and roses, and geraniums, which all grow wild here in great luxuriance and profusion. These spots are occupied, for the most part, by beautiful ornamented cottages, designed and executed, for the most part, in the most correct taste. Indeed, it could not be easy to make anything ugly in a climate so delicious, where all sorts of flowers, and shrubs, and foliage multiply and maintain themselves with such vigour and rapidity. The myrtles fill all the hedges, and grapes grow in festoons from tree to tree, without the assistance of a wall. To the west, the land rises into lofty and breezy downs, and at the extreme point the land has been worn down, by the violence of the sea, into strange detached fragments of white rock, which people call needles, and come a long laborious way to see. They are the only ugly things upon the island. We walked a great deal here, and saw everything at our leisure, by sunlight and moonlight, alone and in a body. I had many delightful reveries, which I shall one day dilate to you; but at present I am scribbling

with all possible rapidity, in order to save the post, which goes out almost immediately. We crossed this morning to Lymington, and came here through the New Forest. This is a fine scene too, and the last of the fine scenes I believe I shall see in England; fine oak wood, spread over rough, uneven country for thirty miles, opening, every now and then, into fine, open, pastoral villages, and broken by heathy mountains, and the windings of a broad arm of the sea;—the day hot and still, mostly cloudy, but with spots and streams of yellow sunshine falling upon the remote and prominent parts of the deep woody circle, and contrasting with the blue vapoury appearance of that distance which remained in shade. I am going, after the vicar rises, to see Netley Abbey, which is said to be the finest view in England. To-morrow we proceed to Windsor, and on Wednesday to London. I set out for Scotland, I think, positively on Monday the 8th; and as I propose to come in the mail, I shall be in Edinburgh on Thursday or Friday morning. A thousand thanks for your kind and compassionate offer of coming to receive me; but I think I shall arrive early in the morning, before you are out of bed. However, I shall write to you again when I have finally fixed on my movements. You must not write to me in answer to this, as I shall not stay to receive it; but I hope you have already written to me. Heaven bless you, and reward you for your kindness to me, &c.—Believe me always, most affectionately yours.

52.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 18th September 1806.

My dear Horner—I wish I had something to say worth your listening to. But my views coincide entirely with yours as to general points, and they are quite as little matured with reference to immediate action. I can assure you, however, that I am not indifferent or inattentive to what is now going on, and that it requires a very frequent recurrence to the principles of my philosophy, and many recollections of my own utter impotence, to prevent me from surprising you with my ardour. It is easy to see what ought to be done, and not difficult to inflame one'self with the contemplation of it. But when we come to the ways and means of carrying it into effect, I own I have never yet been able to discover the slightest ground for confidence or hope, and conclude, therefore, that my affections might be more wisely placed on objects that are more attainable at least, if they are less exalted. I agree with you entirely in thinking that there is in the opulence, intelligence, and morality of our middling people a sufficient quarry of materials to make or to repair a free constitution; but the difficulty is in raising them to the surface. The best of them meddle least with politics; and, except as jurymen or justices of peace, they exercise scarcely any influence upon the public proceedings of the society. The actual government of the country is carried on by something less, I take it, than 200 individuals, who are

rather inclined to believe that they may do anything they please, so long as the more stirring part of the community can be seduced by patronage, and the more contemplative by their love of ease and their dread of violence and innovation. You must falsify the premises of this reasoning by a great moral reform before you can challenge the conclusion. You must make our adventurers and daring spirits more honest, and our honest and intelligent men more daring and ambitious; or, rather, you must find out some channel through which the talent and principle of the latter may be brought to bear upon the actual management of affairs, and may exert its force in controlling or directing the measures of government in some more efficient way than in discoursing in private companies, or lamenting in epistles. This is the problem. There is a great partition set up between the energy that is to save the country, and the energy that is to destroy it; the latter alone is in action, and the other cannot get through to stop it. I scarcely see anything but a revolution, or some other form of violence, that can beat down the ancient and ponderous barrier. Show me how this great work is to be accomplished, and you will find me as zealous, and more active, than any of you. You fine wits of London are not the people, nor are you the persons to stir them. You have too much personal ambition, too much refined philosophy, too much habitual dissipation, and a great deal too much charity and indulgence for idleness, profligacy, and profusion, to project or

execute such a project if it were practicable. I speak of you in the mass. You are not one of them. You try to persuade yourself that you are London-ised, and that it is right to be so. But you are mistaken. It will take you six idle winters to bring you down to that level. But, in truth, I do not think the scheme practicable by any set of persons. The antiquity of our government, to which we are indebted for so many advantages, brings this great compensating evil along with it; there is an oligarchy of great families—borough-mongers and intriguing adventurers—that monopolises all public activity, and excludes the mass of ordinary men nearly as much as the formal institutions of other countries. How can you hope to bring the virtues of the people to bear on the vices of the government, when the only way in which a patriot can approach to the scene of action is by purchasing a seat in Parliament? A correct view of our actual constitution, I have often thought, would be a curious thing, and a careful examination of it ought, at all events, to precede any attempt at reform.

These are some of my general views, and you see they lead naturally to that apathy and apparent indifference in which other circumstances have led me to indulge. You must not sneer any more, however, at my philosophy. I could give you a key to it that would move your pity rather than your derision. My mind is diseased, I know, and I rather think incurably. However, I am sometimes tempted to pluck up a spirit, and to say, like the

old Roman conspirator who came on the stage in his nightcap, "I am not sick, if you have any business that is worth being well for." But these would be but big words, I fear, and I will not say them yet. Whatever I may think of remote consequences, I can have no doubt as to the conduct which the friends of Mr. Fox ought now to adopt. They cannot hope to form an administration of themselves, and they must either unite with the Grenvilles, or see the Hawkesburys and Castlereaghs unite with them. I do not think exactly as you do as to the utter dissolution of the Whig interest. I hope it will generate a new head for itself, as the snails do, instead of dying when the old one is cut off. The bees contrive somehow to make a queen when the place becomes vacant, and are you less political animals than they? Look about among your political infants, and you will discover a new incarnation of the larvæ. It is difficult to kill the soul of a party. And have not your old studies taught you that the demand will insure the supply? I never had any hope of Mr. Fox's recovery, and wondered at those who had. It is very deplorable. Is he to be buried with public honours? I think not. I have written all this without a word of reviewing, and, to say the truth, I am as sick of the subject as you can be, &c.—Very affectionately yours.

53.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 25th November 1806.

My dear Horner—

. . . . . .

I have said nothing all this time to your charge of calumny.—I call you a political adventurer, it seems, and a place hunter, at least I think you so. I never heard such raving in my life before, and am much more inclined to laugh than to be angry. I thought you had known my opinion of you something better. But since you are so miserably ignorant, I must tell it you, I find, whatever offence it may give to your modesty. I do not think there is anybody alive, except perhaps myself, who despises more heartily the emoluments of office, or the personal rewards of political services. I could never for a moment either say or suspect that these things weighed one grain in your calculation, or dictated one action, or one meditation of your heart. But every man has some objects, and I will tell you what I think are yours;—first, to do some good, to make society and posterity your debtors, to be a benefactor to mankind; next, to cultivate and improve your own mind, to acquire a just relish for excellence, and to familiarise yourself with all the accomplishments that make a lofty and amiable character. After those I think your object is to be known for those merits; to enjoy the consideration, the gratitude, the confidence, that must belong to such a being. Those are the things for which you

labour and task yourself. You have other objects of course, but they are attainable on easier terms, and the pursuit of them will never mark your destiny. You would wish to be loved in private life, and to be tranquil and amiable in domestic society; last of all, you would choose to be rich, partly for independence, partly for beneficence, and partly for vanity. This is about the scale by which I arrange the things that seem good to you in this world; and, right or wrong, you will judge whether it will suit a political adventurer.

But I say you will desert your profession, and I prognosticate that politics will engross you. Well, I do; and if you will only have patience, you will soon see and feel what I mean. It is not always convenient for a prophet to explain his predictions, but your perversity provokes one to run this hazard. Will you let me say that I smile with a little incredulity when you assure me, with that virtuous earnestness, that you are attached to your profession *for its own sake?* What! special pleading, wrangling at circuits, quibbling, suppressing scorn for villainous attorneys, sleeping over cases! No, my dear Horner, you have a much better taste. You do *not* love your profession for its own sake; and if you had £10,000 a-year, you would as soon think of a curacy. Then, it is for the money. Independence—that is very right; but I say it is neither first in your list, nor is it attainable by law alone. In the first place, by independence you mean *riches*—something about £2000

a-year. You are in no actual danger of starving, nor is it a matter of *necessity* for you to get this; it is ambition, and I tell you it is not your first ambition. Your leading objects are to do good—to improve yourself—to acquire consideration. Now, do you really think that it is altogether and entirely impossible that you should discover, in the course of a year or two, that you can do more good, and gain more fame and improvement, by devoting yourself to political pursuits, than by drudging on in the more obscure and irksome occupation of a Chancery lawyer? It is a part of my prophecy, you will observe, that you will find yourself of more consequence than you are now aware of, and that you will feel, by and by, that you would not only be defrauding yourself of the destination to which you are entitled, but the public also of services—which are always owing by those who have the power to perform them—by declining the tasks that are put upon you, or withdrawing yourself from the duties which you will find gathering round you. This is what I meant when I said your vocation was for public life. Not that you had a taste for the dirty work of a political underling, or a thirst for the dirt which buys them; and I exhorted you not to struggle against your destiny. I do assure you, not because I saw in you the features of a good tool for a ministry, but because it appeared to me that you were sitting down at the second table, when you had been unequivocally invited to the first. If my premises are right, you cannot dispute my conclusions; and it is

enough for my justification that I believe them to be right. But I care very little about my justification; for I am sure you can never believe, in earnest, that I ever entertained any opinion with regard to you that was not full of affection and esteem.

But I should like to say something for your conviction also, and make you think my opinion not only not injurious to you, but not unreasonable. I can see no motive, however, for your sacrificing the promise of your political career to your profession, but that you are surer of making a regular income by the latter—a very weighty consideration, but not quite suited to the lofty view in which you speak of it. It is not high principle or noble consistency, then, my dear Horner, but vulgar worldly prudence, that determines you to this preference. I say nothing in disparagement of prudence. But what should we have said of the prudence that would have kept Pitt at the bar, or driven Fox to have repaired his fortune at Westminster Hall? I believe you are richer than either of these men, and you have better notions of accuracy. Cure yourself of avarice, then, or a selfish vulgar desire of the vanities and accommodations of upper life, and you may be independent without grating down your faculties in the obscure drudgery of your profession. You need not live at any great expense till you are a minister of state, and then we will supply you with the means. In the meantime, if you contract no debt, you will have your Carnatic allowance to make a little fund of—call that £6000 or £7000.

Then, I suppose you will not be so absurd as to refuse an office in which you may do important service to the public, because there may be a salary annexed to it?

While your party is in power, you cannot, I think, be very long without the offer of some such efficient ill-paid situation; and I do not think I calculate the chances very largely when I say, that, with a proper exertion of economy, and love of independence, you may save £10,000, and more in a few years. Your father, I suppose, will give or leave you something; so that altogether I have made you up an independent fortune of £1000 a-year upon very easy terms. While you remain unmarried you must learn to live upon that, and you will not marry in a hurry. If your party remains long in power you will soon get beyond all this. But I take the chances most unfavourably; and I say that even if you were to return to the bar after having lost three or four years (as the profession will call it) in Parliament, the reputation you will have acquired, and the connexions you will have formed, will insure you employment enough to indemnify you for this vacation, and that if it be somewhat less extensive, it will be more select and agreeable than if you had crept forward on your belly, eating dust in the clamour of your halls of justice.

After all, why should you not venture a little? You are in no danger of being miserably poor;—you can always command an independence (in my humble philosophical sense of the word); and when

that is the case I would obey the call of duty, and the impulse of my own ambition, although I did expose to some hazard my prospect of growing gradually and certainly rich. I am anxious, I have often told you, to see you given up to politics. We have need of you there. We can do very well without you at the bar. There is a deplorable want of young senators with zeal for liberty, and liberal and profound views as to the real interests of mankind. The world is going to ruin for want of them; and shall we quietly permit the few that are gifted with talents and virtues to serve the need of civilized and moralized men, to sneak away from that high duty because they can fill their purses, and furnish their houses, more certainly by drudging at some low employment.

I write all this to you, my dear Horner, very sincerely. I know you will disclaim this character as warmly as you did that you dreamed I gave you. But I must judge of you for myself; and I predict that the world will one day think of you as I do now, and as I have long done. You would have disbelieved me equally, if I had predicted four years ago, when you went, an unknown lad, to London, that by this time you would have forced yourself into the legislature in the most honourable and commanding way, by the mere force of character—without a shadow of subserviency, or even an opportunity of public display. I did predict this at the time, and yet you mock at my prophecies now. Oh thou of little faith! I think you have great talents for public

life, and great virtues, which should be displayed there for correction and example. I have begun lately to think that you had not such qualifications for a lawyer. You cannot work regularly and constantly, nor without anxiety and preparation. Your work would be an infinite oppression to you. It would suffocate you before it rose to £3000 a-year. You must not take it amiss that I tell you this. Indeed I am not over and above sure of the truth of the sentiment, and I will confess it never occurred to me till I had settled it with myself, that it would be a public misfortune and a private blunder if you were to abandon politics for law. Have I wearied you with all this? The length of it, however, will convince you that I am not quite so indifferent about you as you accuse me of being. Indeed, there is nobody upon earth in whom I am more interested, and few things that I desire so earnestly as your happiness and advancement.

I thank you for your concern about me, I am tolerably well. I do not keep late hours, and I indulge no anxiety. It is my misfortune that I have nothing to be anxious about. You must forgive me for not being in raptures with London and London people; and for thinking that the best is, for the most part, so little above the ordinary, that for common occasion it is scarcely at all preferable, and is only sought after from vanity. The whole game of life appears to me a little childish, and the puppets that strut and look lofty very nearly as ludicrous as those that value themselves on their airs and graces—poor

little bits of rattling timber—to be jostled in a bag as soon as the curtain drops. I do not see very much to condemn in my own way of life. I fancy it very natural and rational. If it be not very happy it is not my fault. God bless you, my dear Horner.—Very faithfully yours, F. JEFFREY.

The learned Dr. —— of St. Andrews has nine grown up daughters, and a salary of £90. They have nearly ruined him for potatoes. But three of them have lately gone to try their fortune as dressmakers in London, and fixed themselves in No. 3 Jermyn Street. I was very much amused by their extreme simplicity when they were with my sister, Mrs. Morehead, on their way to town. I am afraid they have but a poor chance of success. Could you persuade Mrs. Horner, out of nationality, to give them any patronage? or Mrs. L. Horner? or my dear Mrs. Smith? One of them served a regular apprenticeship in town, and they are very good girls. Do not despise this. It is really worth while to try to make people happy. Did you ever send the books we spoke of to poor little David Wilson? He will sell them, I daresay, but no matter.

54.—*To Mr. John Jeffrey.*

Edinburgh, 28th January 1807.

My dear John—I received your first melancholy letter * about a month ago, and my first movement

* Announcing the death of his (John's) wife.

was naturally to write to you without a moment's delay. I did so accordingly, but upon considering your letter to my father, in which you seemed to speak so decidedly of your immediate departure from America, I threw my letter into the fire, and was glad to gain a little respite from the task of so distressing a conversation. I have just received your last letter, and regret now that I did not send off my former. It will be so long now before you can hear from me, that I am afraid you will think me negligent; yet I assure you I have thought of little else since I first heard of this dreadful affliction.

How keenly and how painfully I feel for you, you may judge from the cruel similarity of our fortunes, even if there were no deeper sympathy in our characters. The pain I have felt, indeed, is not so properly sympathy, as a renewal of my own afflictions. If I had found any effectual comfort myself, this might enable me to lead you to it also; but I do think your loss irreparable, and I mourn for you as well as for myself. I found no consolation in business, and nothing but new sources of agony in success. The ear is closed in which alone I wished my praises to be sounded, and the prosperity I should have earned with such pride for her, and shared with her with such delight, now only reminds me of my loneliness. I have found one consolation, however, and that is in the love and society of those whom she loved and lived with. Her sister, I think I told you, married Robert Morehead, and is settled here. I am continually with

her, and depend upon her love and confidence in me for all the enjoyment I have still in existence. She loves me with the warmest and most unbounded affection, and while I can be with her, I can still open my heart to sweet and soothing sensations. In living with her friends, and doing what I think would have gained her praise, I sometimes find a faint shadow of the happiness which I enjoyed in her presence. I can give you no other advice, and therefore I am glad that you have not so soon quitted the scene in which you were accustomed to see your darling, and come at once among people to whom she was unknown. You will not love us, I am afraid, because we did not know your Susan, and because her idea is not connected in your mind with any of our concerns, &c.

I hope that even at present you do not indulge in solitude. I never had courage for it, and was driven, I think, by a cruel instinct, into the company of strangers, &c.

Come and find me as affectionate, and unreserved, and domestic, as you knew me in our more careless days. I think I shall be able to comfort you, and revive in you some little interest in life, though I cannot undertake to restore that happiness which, I am afraid, when once cut down, revives not in this world. If I knew when you would arrive, I think I should like to meet you in London, that is, if it be from March to May. I shall probably be there at any rate. Do not neglect to let me know before you set out.

I work at the Review still, and might make it a source of considerable emolument, if I set any value on money. But I am as rich as I want to be, and should be distressed with more, at least if I were to work more for it.

55.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 10th September 1808.

My dear Horner—We Scotch lawyers are much happier in vacation time than you in England; inasmuch as your letter, written from Taunton on the circuit, came to me at Arroquhar, in Argyleshire, where I was enjoying an ease, and a solitude, and a carelessness, of which you followers of assizes, I suppose, must soon lose all recollection. I thank you heartily, however, for that letter; and, being now returned to a region of posts and stationery, I endeavour to bring my hand into acquaintance with penmanship again by saying something to you in return.

I have almost forgotten my review of Fox; but I am extremely glad if it has given you any satisfaction. I remember the sentence for which you triumph over me, and actually put it in, in that form, for the purpose of giving you that triumph. But I am not at all converted. I merely used the language of the occasion. As to the style of Mr. Fox's book, I suppose I have disappointed you. I do not think there are *any* felicities in it. It is often unequivocally bad, and when it is best, there is

little more to be said than that it is nothing particularly objectionable. The History of the Revolution, you see, is reserved by fate for you, &c.

Brougham has been in Edinburgh for some time; but has been but rarely visible on this horizon. I expect Smith hourly. Murray is rusticating, after his own fantastical manner, at Burntisland. Playfair is oscillating all round Edinburgh; and the incorrigible Thomson, still letting his watch-tower light be seen in Castle Street, to the corruption of the whole vicinage, &c.—Ever most affectionately yours.

56.—*To Mr. Malthus.*

21st April 1809.

My dear Sir—I have just read your review of Newenham. It is admirable; and to my taste and feelings beautiful and irresistible. I feel a great degree of pride in saying that the manly and temperate tone of your patriotism—the plain and enlightened benevolence of your views—as far removed from faction and caprice, as from servility or affectation,—are more consonant to my own sentiments and impressions than anything I have yet met with in the writings of my contributors. I honour, and almost envy, you for the dignity and force of your sentiments, and feel new pleasure in the thought of being soon permitted to see you. I think I shall set out from this on Sunday in the mail; and expect to be with you some time early on Wednesday. I must be in London, I fear, on Thurs-

day evening, but we shall see.—Believe me ever, dear Sir, your very faithful and obliged.

57.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 22d December 1809.

My dear Allen—Unless you knew the horrors of drudging in two courts in this plashy weather, you can form no conception of the misery in which I have lived since I wrote you last, or of the difficulty I find in catching an hour to write to anybody. Your Laborde is admirable, not only for its unexampled accuracy and clearness, which are invaluable graces in such a Review as ours, but also for the neatness and liveliness of the writing, which is greater, I think, than in any of your former contributions, &c.

I see the Quarterly announced, with Canning's Statement as its leading article. This is keeping clear of politics with a vengeance! Smith wrote me offering to take that subject. I rather dissuaded him, but if they make any push I think I should let him try his hand. Some of you on the spot should tell him the personalities and the current impressions.

Well, what is to become of us? I am for a furious unsparing attack; taking Walcheren and the Catholics up without reserve or equivocation, and going boldly against the King and all his favourites. To do this with effect something must be yielded to the democratic party. Indeed, if the Whigs do not

make some sort of a coalition with the Democrats, they are nobody, and the nation is ruined, internally as well as from without. There are but two parties in the nation—the Tories, who are almost for tyranny, and the Democrats, who are almost for rebellion. The Whigs stand powerless and unpopular between them, and must side with, and infuse their spirit into, one or other of them before they can do the least good. Now, the Tories will not coalesce with them, and the Democrats will; and, therefore, it is the duty of the Whigs to take advantage of this, and to strengthen themselves by the alliance of those who will otherwise overwhelm both them and their antagonists. Such are my notions; and, moreover, that unless you make a sincere, direct, and even desperate assault tolerably early in this session, there is no hope for the country. Illuminate me with a ray of your intelligence.—Most faithfully yours.

58.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 4th May 1810.

My dear Allen—

. . . . . .

I am very glad to hear that the Whigs are going to do something for popularity as well as for consistency. My own opinion certainly is, that nothing can save them or the country, but their becoming very popular in their principles, to the full extent of Whitbread's speeches in Parliament. You all

clamour against my review of parties,* and yet, does not all that is doing in London, Westminster, and Middlesex, prove that I am right? Is it not visible that the great body of the people there is either servile or democratical, and I really see no reason for refusing to take them as a sample of the general population. I know that I stated the dangers of the thing coming to a crisis too strongly, and I knew it at the time; but what I meant, and what I still believe is, that if *any* crisis ever come—if the present miserable system is ever to be corrected by the sense and spirit of the nation—that the nation would then appear under these two divisions. Any great calamity would bring on this crisis. If your trade were effectually stopped, and your taxes prodigiously deficient, or if there were a French army in Ireland, you would see this split take place, and the Whigs thrown out and distracted. What is the new Cabinet to be? and how do the judicious look forward to the end of the session?

I think a reform in the Scotch counties would be opposed furiously by all the pupils of Lord Melville, but it would be carried in spite of them if the English Tories would tolerate it. I have no doubt that good will be done by trying it.—Ever very faithfully yours.

Brown is elected joint Professor with D. Stewart.

* No. 30, art. 15.

59.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 20th July 1810.

My dear Horner—I must grow considerably more wicked even than I am, before I can feel anything but gratitude for your advices. Even if I were not instructed by their justness, I should at least be delighted by the proof they afforded of your kindness. We are growing too factious;—I admit it; and it mortifies me as much as any one to think that we are. But you judge rightly of my limited power, and of the overgrown privileges of some of my subjects. I am but a feudal monarch at best, and my throne is overshadowed by the presumptuous crests of my nobles. However, I issue laudable edicts, inculcating moderation and candour, and hope in time to do some little good. A certain spice of aristocracy in my own nature withholds me from the common expedient of strengthening myself by a closer union with the lower orders; but I would give a great deal for a few chieftains of a milder and more disciplined character. Thank you, a thousand times, for your ready compliance with my request, and your kind promise of continuing to illumine the public through our pages, in spite of all the violence with which they are defaced. I can give you till the 10th or 12th of August to transmit your first contribution. Make it as full, and long, and popular, as you can; and give us an outline of your whole doctrine, rather than a full exposition and vindication of its questionable and disputed

points, which may come after. That is, I should like that arrangement best, if it be equally suitable to your own views.

I should be ashamed to think that I now scarcely ever write to you except on those subjects, if I wrote to anybody upon any other. But though I feel the same interest in my friends, and rather more affection for them than formerly, I have become infinitely more impatient of the tediousness of writing, and have reduced my once boundless correspondence very nearly within the dimensions of a banker's line. It is for this reason chiefly that I am so anxious to see you, when I will engage both to talk and to listen with all the freedom and earnestness of former days. I like your plan of a congress in Yorkshire, and shall note down your periods, and try to make my own resolutions conform to them. But why will you not come down here, when I should be sure of seeing you? I am well enough in health again, but very indolent and inefficient in intellect; and for this week past have found a slight headache, or the noise of hammering up shelves, a sufficient apology for running out of the house, and spending my whole mornings in the open air. Do write me a friendly letter now and then; and, greatly as I abhor writing, I promise to answer it, both speedily and at full length.

Have you seen Stewart's volume, and what do you think of it? I find it rather languid from its great diffusiveness, and want of doctrinal precision. The tone excellent, and the taste on the whole good.

But this excessive length is the sin of all modern writers. Shall we never again see anything like Hume's Essays? I thank you for liking Crabbe, though the wretch has monstrous faults. I hope he will give us a tragic poem some day. I have overpraised him a little; but I think I am safe as to consistency; and I think I have marked the distinction between him and Wordsworth in my account of his former work.

What do you say to reform? I think you go too far about privilege. Though I do not deny its existence, I think there would be no great harm in obliging you to prove, in a court of law, that what we complained of did in every instance fall under the proper conception of privilege, as established by a sufficient usage, in good times, or a clear or indisputable analogy. However, I am mainly ignorant on the subject, and have the misfortune of not seeing the application of one-half of what has been written about it. Playfair is in Ireland,—Stewart at Kinniel,—Seymour on the Clyde,—Murray in Peeblesshire,—and Thomson in the Register House. I must be immediately in the printing-office, and anticipate three weeks of great discomfort.—Believe me ever very faithfully yours.

60.—*To Francis Horner.*

Edinburgh, 25th January 1811.

My dear Horner—I am very ungrateful for not having answered your kind letter before, but I have

been so harassed with law and want of sleep, that I have never had a minute when I could sit down with a safe conscience and composed spirit to thank you, &c.

Yes—*some* good will be done by turning out the present ministry, if it were only for a day. But are they to go out? or is there *any* truth in the Courier's stories of the dissensions of the opposite body? Our Whigs here are in great exultation, and had a fourth more at Fox's dinner yesterday than ever attended before. There was Sir H. Moncreiff sitting between two papists;—and Catholic emancipation drank with great applause;—and the lamb lying down with the wolf—and all millennial. Stewart* came from the country on purpose to attend, and all was decorous and exemplary, &c. I think I shall come to town in April. If the Whigs be in power, it will be worth while for the rarity of the spectacle; like the aloe blossoming, a few days, once in a hundred years, &c.

There is nothing new here. The meek, who inherit the earth, pass their time very quietly in the midst of all these perturbations, and I among them. I am a good deal with Playfair and Alison,—and teach them philanthropy and latitudinarian indulgence. Playfair is quite well this season, and not quite so great a flirt as he was last year. Stewart comes in sometimes, and has become quite robustious;—jogs on horseback two hours every day in all weather, and superintends transcribing as a serious

* Professor Dugald.

business all the evening. He is an excellent person; without temper, or a sufficiently steady and undisturbable estimation of himself. And then he is an idle dog;—almost as great a *fainéant* as I or Cocky Manners.* You will call all this blasphemy; but it is very true, and I love him all the better for believing it. Murray is in great preservation—a little too bustling and anxious for my epicurean god state;—but in fine temper, and not at all low, nor so absent as usual. Thomson a thought bilious; and altogether discreet and amiable.

I have written a long sermon about reform. It is something in the tone of my state of parties article, which you all abused,—and which I consequently think the best of all my articles, and the justest political speculation that has appeared in our immortal journal.† It is nothing but sheer envy that makes any of you think otherwise. However, this will not be so assailable.—Ever very affectionately yours.

61.—*To Charles Bell, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 4th April 1811.

My dear Bell—Not many things in this world could give me greater pleasure than the affectionate tone of your letter, and the pleasing picture it holds out to me. You are doing exactly what you should do; and if my approbation is at all necessary to your happiness you may be in ecstacy. I think all men who are capable of rational happiness ought to

* A bookseller in Edinburgh. † No. 30, art. 15.

marry. I think you in particular likely to derive happiness from marrying; and I think the woman whom you have chosen peculiarly calculated to make you happy. God bless you. You have behaved hitherto with admirable steadiness and magnanimity, and have earned the confidence of all your friends, as well as the means of enjoyment. I cannot lament your nationality very bitterly, both because it holds of all that is happy and amiable, and because I hope it will give us a chance of seeing you often among us. Besides, when you have Scottish tones and smiles perpetually before you, London will become a sort of Scotland to you. You have but two faults in your character, and I think marriage will go a great way to cure them both. One is a little too much ambition, which really is not conducive to happiness; and the other, which arises I believe from the former, is a small degree of misanthropy, particularly towards persons of your own profession. Your wife's sweetness of temper will gradually bring you into better humour with the whole world, and your experience of the incomparable superiority of quiet and domestic enjoyments to all the paltry troubles that are called splendour and distinction, will set to rights any other little errors that may now exist in your opinions. At all events, you will be delivered from the persecution of my admonitions, as it would be a piece of unpardonable presumption to lecture a man who has a wife to lecture him at home.

62.—*To Mrs. Morehead.*

London, Sunday, 12th May 1811.

My dear Marjory—This is now my last day in London, and burning hot it is. Even the east wind, I think, would be delightfully refreshing; and though I have been courting the air in the shady walks of the park, I feel the heat of the hotel quite suffocating. I wrote yesterday to John, and brought my journal up to that forenoon, and now I proceed. Drove out before dinner with Mrs. Pigou to Kensington—a most lovely afternoon—horse chesnuts in magnificent bloom—the grass so fresh and velvet green after the rains, and the water so cool and blue. We stopped under a May bush in full blossom, and filled the carriage nearly full of it. Came home rather too late for dinner, and went to Nugent's (a brother of Lord N., and a great traveller), where we had an assemblage of wits and fine gentlemen—our old friends Ward, and Smith, and Brougham, and Milnes, who threatened last year to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Brummell, the most complete fine gentleman in all London, and Luttrell, and one or two more. The repast was exceedingly voluptuous. The talk on the whole good. I had a long quiet chat with Ward, who is, after all, I think, the cleverest and most original man in this pretending society. About eleven I went to the opera with Smith, who left me in the most perfidious manner in the Princess' box, out of which I found it impossible to escape for nearly a whole hour; during all

which no one individual looked in upon her deserted royalty. It was really a pitiable spectacle to see her and poor Lady —— reflecting each other's ennui from the two corners of their superb canopy, struggling for a laugh in the middle of a yawn, and sinking under the weight of their lonely dignity. I then went to Mrs. Spencer, who was nearly as lonely, and got home (after the usual scene of squeezing) about one. To-day Dicky Bright not having come as he promised, I went up to breakfast with my friend Mr. Simond, and took him to see Lord Elgin's marbles. I afterwards called on Brougham and Kennedy, and recruited myself with a walk in the Park. I am now about to dress to go to Holland House, where I hear there is to be a great party. To-morrow my travelling companions breakfast here, and we set off about eleven. I shall finish this epistle either in the morning or on the road. In the meantime heaven bless you.

Monday morning, three o'clock.—Well, my London campaign is closed at last, thank heaven! and I cannot go to bed till I render you this last account of it. Mrs. Pigou offered to set me down at Holland House in her carriage; so we went through the park about seven in the most beautiful but sultry evening —calm, blue, and silver water, noble trees, fragrant shrubs, and clouds, and masses of blossom—the whole air as you go up Holland Park is perfumed with briars, May lilies, and a thousand fragrant shrubs. Inside the assembly was great. The

old Duke of Norfolk, almost as big and as fond of wine as Lord Newton,* but with the air and tone and conversation of an old baron bidding defiance to his sovereign. Lords Say and Sele, Harrington, Besborough, Cowper, Dundas, &c., with Dudley North, a wit and patriot of the old Fox school, breaking out every now and then into little bursts of natural humour. Ladies Besborough, Cowper, Caroline Lamb, &c. A most magnificent repast, and Lady Holland in great gentleness and softness; sat between D. North and the Duke, and had a good deal of talk with both. In the drawing room had much conversation with Lady C. Lambe, who is supposed to be more witty and eccentric than any lady in London, but it did not appear to me very charming. Was brought home by Lord Dundas about twelve, and went by appointment to the Pigous, where we had a very quiet and really very pleasing evening till this moment. Nobody but Smith, who is quieter than usual, and Miss ——, who is always gentle and elegant. It is high mid-summer heat, and exquisitely lovely, a soft green moon, and a soft blush of kindling dawn, and still, but bright pure air, and a sort of vernal fragrance which makes itself be felt even in London, as you pass through the squares and past the gardens of the quieter houses. Well, I have all my packing to do yet. Kennedy wishes to get his letters before setting off to-morrow, so we shall not be in motion till near twelve. Good night. God bless you. I

* A Scotch Judge.

hope the delicious weather has reached to you, and driven away those cruel headaches. I shall add a word or two in the morning.

Eaton, sixty miles from London, Monday night.—Here I am, my dear Marjory, really and truly on my way home, and feeling as if just awakened from the feverish and bewildering dream of London. We did not get away till twelve, and have come on delightfully in a smooth running chariot with a large dicky. Burning hot day indeed; but a breathing and fragrant air, and everything so fresh, and green, and beautiful, that the thoughts of the brick and noise we have left almost make me shudder. I have brought this letter on, thinking it would go as soon by this night's mail, and now I find that it is doubtful whether it will go till to-morrow. But it is no matter.—Ever yours most affectionately

63.—*To Mrs. Morehead.*

Stirling, Friday night, 7th September 1811.

My dear Marjory—The most beautiful day, and the most beautiful place that ever was; but I am afraid I shall have too much of it, for I suspect now that I must stay till Monday. My own trial will go I think to-morrow; but there is a poor wretch indicted for Monday who relied upon some man coming here for him, who has not come; and he is so miserable about his destitution, that I have

engaged to stay for him if his own faithless counsel should not appear.—Ever affectionately yours.

64.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 5th January 1813.

My dear Horner—I have heard an obscure rumour that you had spoken favourably to somebody* of my review of Leckie; which I am much afraid would appear tedious to all persons who are past their A B C in such matters. However, you know I always profess to write for babes and sucklings, and take no merit but for making things level to the meanest capacities. When I saw you at ——, I think you said you were growing more in charity with that meritorious sort of prosing; and indeed all philanthropic persons who commerce a little largely in the world, and find how many of all ages have still their whole education to begin upon everything where right opinions are of any importance, will daily feel more indulgence for the slow and persevering methods which persons still more philanthropic must use for the instruction of these unfortunate infants. It is to this feeling I take it for granted I am indebted for your good opinion. For there is a good part of that article which I thought in considerable danger of being attacked and ridiculed, as a caricature of our Scotch manner of running everything up to elements, and explaining all sorts of occurrences by a theoretical history of society. The last twelve or fifteen pages have a little more spirit, &c.

But now, my dear Horner, if you are in tolerable humour with the Review, will you let me remind you again of a kind of promise you made to supply me with a few notes about Windham, and especially with a theoretical history of the cause and progress of his political opinions. I had hopes that in this interlunation of your parliamentary course you might have found leisure to have done this, and perhaps a little more for me, &c.

Tell me some news—and some new books, if you hear of any; and at any rate write me a long letter in the style of your earlier days. And tell me that you have got rid of your coughs and maladies—and will take a walk in the Highlands with me next autumn.—Ever very affectionately yours.

65.—*To J. A. Murray, Esq. (afterwards Lord Murray).*

Liverpool, 20th August 1813.

My dear Murray—I reported progress to Thomson some days ago, and expected before this time to have indited a valedictory epistle to you; but at present the chance is, I think, that I shall come back and spend the winter, and probably much longer, among you. The short of it is, that Government has expressly intimated to one of the two cartels now here that they will not allow either British or Americans to embark for the United States, till they receive a satisfactory explanation of the detention of certain British subjects in that country, &c.

But God's will be done. I endeavour to possess

my soul in patience, and shall await the issue of this movement, and of my own afflictions, as tranquilly as possible. Our rulers, with their usual vacillation, may relent and draw back from their threat, or some contrivance may be fallen upon to enable me to elude it.

I have been dining out every day for this last week with Unitarians, and Whigs, and Americans, and brokers, and bankers, and small fanciers of pictures and paints, and the Quaker aristocracy, and the fashionable vulgar, of the place. But I do not like Liverpool much better, and could not live here with any comfort. Indeed I believe I could not live anywhere out of Scotland. All my recollections are Scottish, and consequently all my imaginations; and though I thank God that I have as few fixed opinions as any man of my standing, yet all the elements out of which they are made have a certain national cast also. In short, I will not live anywhere else if I can help it; nor die either; and all old Esky's* eloquence would have been thrown away in an attempt to persuade me that *banishment furth the kingdom* might be patiently endured. I take more to Roscoe however; he is thoroughly good-hearted, and has a sincere, though foolish, concern for the country. I have also found out a Highland woman with much of the mountain accent, and

* Lord Eskgrove, a Judge, who consoled a friend he was obliged to banish, by assuring him, that there really were places in the world, such as England for example, where a man, though out of Scotland, might live with some little comfort.

sometimes get a little girl to talk to. But with all these resources, and the aid of the botanical garden, the time passes rather heavily, and I am in some danger of dying of ennui, with the apparent symptoms of extreme vivacity. Did you ever hear that most of the Quakers die of stupidity—actually and literally? I was assured of the fact the other day by a very intelligent physician who practised twenty years among them, and informs me that few of the richer sort live to be fifty, but die of a sort of atrophy, their cold blood just stagnating by degrees among their flabby fat. They eat too much, he says, take little exercise, and, above all, have no nervous excitement. The affection is known in this part of the country by the name of *the Quaker's disease*, and more than one-half of them go out so. I think this curious, though not worth coming to Liverpool to hear, or writing from Liverpool, &c.—Ever most truly yours.

66.—*To Robert Morehead.*

Liverpool, 28th August 1813.

My dear Bob—I think now that we shall embark to-morrow, and have to bid you heartily farewell. I hope to be back in December; but you need not give me over for lost, although I should not appear quite so soon. I have explained to Margaret the grounds upon which I look upon the hazard of detention as extremely slight in any case, and have nothing more to add on that subject, of which I take a more correct view than any of the talkers

or newspaper politicians, who may be pleased to have another opinion. I am almost ashamed of the degree of sorrow I feel at leaving all the early and long-prized objects of my affection; and though I am persuaded I do right in the step which I am taking, I cannot help wishing that it had not been quite so wide and laborious a one. You cannot think how beautiful Hatton appears at this moment in my imagination, nor with what strong emotion I fancy I hear Tuckey* telling a story on my knee, and see Margaret poring upon her French before me. It is in your family that my taste for domestic society and domestic enjoyments has been nurtured and preserved. Such a child as Tuckey I shall never see again in this world. Heaven bless her; and she will be a blessing both to her mother and to you.

But I must proceed to business. In this packet you will find my picture, which you will present, with my best love and affection, to Margaret. I have sent my will to George Bell, with instructions to bring it to you, if the time comes for using it.

I have got your volume of poems, which I read very often, and shall make Miss Wilkes read. Poetry is a great source of delight, but not with a view to consequences. The greatest and most delighted poets cared least about its success. Homer and Shakspere gave themselves no concern about who should praise or ridicule them; and the charm

* A nickname for one of Mr. Morehead's daughters.

of the thing is gone, I think, as soon as the poet allows any visions of critics or posterity to come across him. He is then in very worldly company, and is a very worldling himself, in so far as he feels any anxiety about their proceedings. If I were you, however, I would live more with Tuckey, and be satisfied with my gardening and pruning—with my preaching—a good deal of walking, and comfortable talking. What more has life? and how full of vexation are all ambitious fancies and perplexing pursuits! Well, God bless you! Perhaps I shall not have an opportunity to inculcate my innocent epicurism upon you for a long time again. It will do you no harm. The weather is fine, and, they say, is like to continue so through this moon. I think Margaret should get somebody to be with her during a part, at least, of the autumn. She has been so long accustomed to our chat, and even to my writing, that when there is a pause, I am afraid she may grow dull upon it. You must cheer her, and not let her dwell on alarms, even when you may fancy that there are some grounds for them. I am glad you like my W. Penn. I have an affection for that kind of man myself; but there can be no such person in the present age. If you have a mind to try your hand at a review, it would be obliging; but, perhaps, this is coming too much into the worldly contest and weary struggle, for your views.

Do not let Tuckey forget me, and breed up

Lockhart* to admire me. Bill† I often remember too with great kindness, and also Charles — the young parson's† meek and cheerful visage I duly recal with blessings.

You must do duty by visiting round about Hatton in my absence, to keep up the character of the place, and the sense of our existence.—Remember me kindly, and believe me always, my dear Bob, yours very affectionately.

67.—*To Mr. Malthus.*

Edinburgh, 12th May 1814.

My dear Malthus—I am quite ashamed to think that I have never written to you since my return to this country, although I found a kind letter from you, I think, actually waiting my arrival. But I have been so harassed with all kinds of arrears and engagements, &c.

Will you be very angry if I tell you that it was none of those good feelings that forced me to write to you at present, but a mixture of regret and admiration which I have just experienced in reading your pamphlets on the corn trade? Admiration for the clearness, soundness, and inimitable candour, of your observations, and regret that you did not let me put them into the Review. You know they would be read there by twice as many people as ever see pamphlets. And for your glory and credit it might have been as well known to all those that you

* Another of Mr. Morehead's children. † Two of his boys.

care about, as if your name had been on the title. It cannot be helped now, however; and I must just aggravate my admiration till it altogether drowns my regret. I trust, however, that you will not spoil me a review as well as tantalize me by having missed one so excellent. Horner had promised to give me some remarks on the subject, but I am half afraid your pamphlet will put him in despair. In my opinion, indeed, it leaves nothing to be added; though I must add, that you have the great advantage of being very much of my way of thinking on the subject. Horner is much more Smithish; and I had written him a long letter to abate his confidence, when I had the felicity of finding all my lame arguments set on their legs, and my dark glimpses of reason brought into full day in your pages.

Write me a line or two in friendship, in spite of my apparently ungrateful conduct, from which I have suffered enough already; and tell me something of Bonaparte too, and Alexander, and the future destiny of the world.—Most faithfully yours.

68.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 25th February 1815.

My dearest Friend—All well and prosperous enough, and some of us so busy, or at least so improvident, as scarcely to have time to say more; and when I have added that we think of you hourly, and with love as warm and active as when we last

vanished from your sight, what more is there to say? Let us see, &c.

It would only be tantalising you to tell you of new books, when I have no means of sending them to you; and, indeed, there are but few worth telling you about. Dugald Stewart has a new volume of philosophy, very dull and dry; Scott a new poem, not good; and Southey another, less faulty than any of his former productions. Then we have Waverley, which I think admirable; and another by the same author (who still wears his mask), not quite so powerful, but still a very extraordinary performance. The title is Guy Mannering. There is also a little poem called the Paradise of Coquettes, more Popian than anything since the time of Pope; but *fade* a little for want of matter, and by too great length. Author still unknown also. In a month's time I hope we may be able to send you all these things, and some more. This peace lingers long in her descent, however; and more blood, I am afraid, must be shed on the earth before she reaches it. You are too desponding as to the future prospects of America. She will breed an aristocracy by and by, and then you will get rid of all your vulgar miseries. Only take care that you do not cast off your love of liberty along with them. As we are still at war, however, I abstain from all such speculations. I have said nearly what I think in my article on that subject in last number of the Review, though too shortly on the great point to be intelligible to those who do not think with me before. You guess a little better at

my articles in these last numbers, though you are not quite right yet; but I cannot set you right to-night, for Charlotte has got your letter locked up, and she has been in bed this hour, and I forget now what are your blunders. In the last number for December I do a great deal, though not very well—Wordsworth, the Scottish poets, Waverley and America, besides vamping and patching.

I have had an extraordinary fit of professional zeal all this term, and have attended to little but law; so I am behind hand again with my Review, and sick at heart of it. But I cannot afford to quit yet, and must scribble on—begging, borrowing, and coining. We are getting jury trial in certain civil cases too, and that will give me more work. For you must know I am a great juryman in the few cases that are now tried in that way, and got a man off last week for murdering his wife, to the great indignation of the Court, and discontent of all good people. Adam, the Prince's Adam, whom you may perhaps have heard of, comes down to teach us how to manage civil juries. He is a Baron of our Exchequer already, for which he has £2000, and is to have as much more for presiding in this Court. He is a very sensible man, and good humoured, but knows almost as little of juries as we do; so we shall make fine work for a while I imagine; but you care as little about this as I do about your paper dollars: and you are quite right. I do not know why I talk of it, &c.

John is well, but deplorably idle, and like all

idle people, more difficult to entertain than those who are busy. Much as I patronise idleness, and firmly as I still believe that it would bring no *ennui* to myself, I daily see the prodigious advantage which a regular occupation brings in this capital article of amusement. Every little interval of leisure, and almost every sort of frivolous thought you can fill it with, is a delight to a man who has escaped from hard work; while those who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves, find no delight in anything. For this reason I doubt whether your American young ladies, who have not half so many tasks and restraints put upon them as young ladies everywhere else have, are altogether so happy on the whole; and I think I have seen more visible marks of ennui in the misses just entered on their teens, who are allowed so prematurely to pass their whole mornings in parading in Broadway, than I ever saw in so young faces before. When I write my threatened book upon female education, I must rank that of your free country among the most injudicious. Charlotte writes to her mother. Remember me most kindly to her and to all. I have still a romantic hankering after your bay, and Jersey woods, and cannot forgive myself now for not having gone up your Hudson. I must absolutely go back I find, and repair those omissions. I remember you promised to give me a piece of land with trees and wild streams, and I fancy I shall come over and be buried there. I told you in my last how angry I was at hearing of the Philadelphia publication of

my journal. I never shewed a scrap of it to any one there, and there is nothing in it, as you know, of personal ridicule, either of Monro or any of the other ministers. I beg you would contradict it in my name. As soon as there is peace I shall write to Monro myself to thank him for his kindness to me, and I should not like that he should have believed me capable of such duplicity and ingratitude. Is it true that Walsh is turned democrat? Do not forget to tell him that I never believed the paltry gossips about his ill usage of his wife's family. You know I quarrelled with Mrs. S. on the subject at Philadelphia; and now God bless you. I am very sleepy, and shall go and dream of the bark and blooming dale, and your gliding sails, and blue waters, and poplars, and pet greenhouses.—Ever most affectionately yours.

69.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 12th March 1815.

My dear Horner—

. . . . . .

You need make no apology for your principles to me. I have never for an instant considered them as other than just and noble. As an old friend and countryman, I am proud of their purity and elevation, and should have no higher ambition, if I were at all in public life, than to share and enforce them. I say this with reference to your attachment to party, your regard to character, and your candour

and indulgence to those of whom you have to complain. Situated as I am, at a distance from all active politics, the two first strike me as less important, and I give way to my political and constitutional carelessness without any self reproach. If I were in your place it is probable I should feel differently, but these are none of the matters on which I should ever think of quarrelling with your principles of judgment.

Neither will I deny that the Review might have been more firmly conducted, and greater circumspection used to avoid excesses of all sorts. Only the anxiety of such a duty would have been very oppressive to me, and I have ever been slow to believe the matter of so much importance as to impose it absolutely upon me. I have not, however, been altogether without some feelings of duty on the subject; and it is as to the limits and extent of these that I am inclined to differ with you. Perhaps it would have been better to have kept more to general views. But in such times as we have lived in, it was impossible not to mix them, as in fact they mix themselves, with questions which might be considered as of a narrower and more factious description. In substance it appeared to me that my only absolute duty as to political discussion, was, to forward the great ends of liberty, and to exclude nothing but what had a tendency to promote servile, sordid, and corrupt principles. As to the *means* of attaining these ends, I thought that considerable latitude should be indulged, and that

unless the excesses were very great and revolting, every man of talent should be allowed to take his own way of recommending them. In this way it always appeared to me that a considerable diversity was quite compatible with all the consistency that should be required in a work of this description, and that doctrines might very well be maintained in the same number which were quite irreconcilable with each other, except in their common tendency to repress servility, and diffuse a general spirit of independence in the body of the people. This happens, I take it, in every considerable combination of persons for one general end; and in every debate on a large and momentous question, I fancy that views are taken and principles laid down by those who concur in the same vote, which bear in opposite directions, and are brought from the most adverse points of doctrine. Yet all these persons cooperate easily enough, and no one is ever held to be responsible for all the topics and premises which may be insisted on by his neighbours.

To come, for instance, to the topic of attacks on the person of the sovereign. Many people, and I profess myself to be one, may think such a proceeding at variance with the dictates of good taste, of dangerous example, and repugnant to good feelings; and therefore they will not themselves have recourse to it. Yet it would be difficult, I think, to deny that it is, or may be, a lawful weapon to be employed in the great and eternal contest between the court and the country. Can there be any doubt that the personal

influence, and personal character, of the sovereign is an element, and a pretty important element, in the practical constitution of the Government, and always forms part of the strength or weakness of the administration he employs? In the abstract, therefore, I cannot think that attempts to weaken that influence, to abate a dangerous popularity, or even to excite odium towards a corrupt and servile ministry, by making the prince, on whose favour they depend, generally contemptible or hateful, are absolutely to be interdicted or protested against. Excesses no doubt may be committed. But the system of attacking abuses of power, by attacking the person who instigates or carries them through by general popularity or personal influence, is lawful enough I think, and may form a large scheme of Whig opposition,—not the best or the noblest part certainly, but one not without its use,—and that may on some occasions be altogether indispensable. It does not appear to me, therefore, that the degree of sanction that may be given to such attacks, by merely writing in the same journal where they occasionally appear, is to be considered as a sin against conscience or the constitution, or would be so imputed.

I say all this, however, only to justify my own laxity on these points, and certainly with no hope of persuading you to imitate it. With regard to the passages in last number, which you consider as a direct attack on the Whig party, I must say that it certainly did not strike me in that light when I first

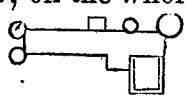
read it; nor can I yet persuade myself that this is its true and rational interpretation. I took it, I confess, as an attack,—not upon any regular party or connexion in the State,—but upon these individuals, either in party or out of it, to whose *personal* qualities it seemed directly to refer,—men such as have at all times existed, who, with honourable and patriotic sentiments, and firmness enough to resist direct corruption and intimidation, yet wanted vigour to withstand the softer pleas of civility or friendship, and allowed their public duties to be postponed, rather than give offence or pain to individuals with whom they were connected. This I really conceive is the natural and obvious application of the words that are employed, and I am persuaded they will appear to the general view of readers to have no deeper meaning. Certainly they suggested no other to me; and if they had, I would undoubtedly have prevented their publication; for I should look upon such an attack as that as a violation of that fidelity to the cause of liberty to which I think we are substantially pledged.

I wish I had ten minutes talk with you instead of all this scribble, &c.—Believe me always very affectionately yours.

70.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Craigcrook, 7th May 1815.

My dear Friend—We are trying to live at this place for a few days, just to find out what scenes are

pleasant, and what holes the wind blows through. I must go back to town in two or three days for two months, but in July we hope to return, and finish our observations in the course of the autumn. It will be all scramble and experiment this season, for my new buildings will not be habitable till next year, and the rubbish which they occasion will be increased by endless pulling down of walls, levelling and planting of shrubs, &c. Charley wishes me to send you a description of the place, but it will be much shorter and more satisfactory to send you a drawing of it, which I shall get some of my artist friends to make out. In the meantime try to conceive an old narrow high house, eighteen feet wide and fifty long, with irregular projections of all sorts; three little staircases, turrets, and a large round tower at one end; on the whole exhibiting a ground plan like this  with multitudes of windows of all shapes and sizes, placed at the bottom of a green slope ending in a steep woody hill, which rises to the height of 300 or 400 feet on the west, and shaded with some respectable trees near the door,—with an old garden (or rather two, one within the other) stuck close on one side of the house, and surrounded with massive and aged stone walls fifteen feet high. The inner garden I mean to lay down chiefly in smooth grass, with clustered shrubs and ornamental trees beyond, to mask the wall, and I am busy in widening the approaches and substituting sunk fences for the high stone walls on the

lawn. My chief operation, however, consists in an additional building, which I have marked out with *double lines* on the elegant plan above, in which I shall have one excellent and very pleasant room of more than twenty-eight feet in length by eighteen in breadth, with a laundry and store-room below, and two pretty bed-chambers above. The windows of these rooms are the only ones in the whole house which will look to the hill and that sequestered and solemn view, which is the chief charm of the spot. The largest, Charlotte and I have agreed to baptise by your name, and little Charley is to be taught to call it *grandpapa's room*, as soon as she can speak. So you must come and take possession of it soon, or the poor child will get superstitious notions of you, as an invisible being. In the meantime the walls are only ten feet high, and C. and I sleep in a little dark room, not twelve feet square, in the tower, and I have contracted for all my additional building to be built solidly of stone for about £450, and expect to execute most of my other improvements, among which a new roof to the old house is the weightiest, for about as much more. I have a lease for twenty years of near fifteen acres for £32 a-year, for which lease, however, I paid £1200, and I can get it prolonged to thirty years on reasonable terms. I get this year near £60 for my fields, which I mean to keep for ever in grass. And now you know all about my establishment here that you can easily know without coming to see it, and all you deserve to know unless you will come. I have an excellent

gardener for £45 a year, who engages to do all my work himself, with the help of two labourers, for a week or two in spring; but I fear he could not undertake a greenhouse without neglecting his grass and gravel. I need not tell you that Charlotte is well, because she is writing to you herself, nor that baby is delicious, for I daresay she tells you nothing else. I think she will be very happy here, and it will be less a banishment to people without a carriage than Hatton, for she has already made the experiment of walking into Edinburgh and back again without any fatigue. The distance is not more than two miles and a half, &c.—Ever most affectionately yours.

71.—*To Francis Horner, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 9th June 1815.

My dear Horner—

Here I lie,
Shot by a sky-
Rocket in the eye.*

This is literally true, except that I am not dead, nor quite blind. But I have been nearly so for the last week, or I could not have neglected your very kind letter so long. I am a sad wretch of a correspondent however, even when I have my eyesight, and deserve your kindness in no way, but by valuing and returning it.

I am mortally afraid of the war, and I think that

* He had been struck, and alarmingly, by a rocket, near the eye, on the 4th of June.

is all I can say about it. I hate Bonaparte too, because he makes me more afraid than anybody else, and seems more immediately the cause of my paying income-tax, and having my friends killed with dysenteries and gun-shot wounds, and making my country unpopular, bragging, and servile, and everything that I do not wish it to be. I do think, too, that the risk was, and is, far more imminent and tremendous, of the subversion of all national independence, and all peaceful virtues, and mild and generous habits, by his insolent triumph, than by the success of the most absurd of those who are allied against him. Men will not be ripe for a reasonable or liberal government on this side of the millenium. But though old abuses are likely to be somewhat tempered by the mild measures of wealthy communities, and the diffusion of something like intelligence and education among the lower orders, I really cannot bring myself, therefore, to despise and abuse the Bourbons, and Alexander, and Francis, with the energy which you do. They are absurd, shallow, and hollow persons, I daresay. But they are not very atrocious, and never will have the power to do half so much mischief as their opponent. I prefer, upon the whole, a set of tyrants, if it must be so, that we can laugh at, and would rather mix contempt with my political dislike, than admiration or terror. You admire greatness much more than I do, and have a far more extensive taste for the *sublime* in character. So I could be in my heart for taking a hit at Bonaparte in public or in private, whenever

I thought I had him at an advantage; and would even shuffle a little on the score of morality and national rights, if I could insure success in my enterprise. But I am dreadfully afraid, and do not differ from you in seeing little but disorder on either side of the picture. On the whole, however, my wishes must go to the opposite side from yours, I believe; and that chiefly from my caring more about the present, compared with the future. I really cannot console myself for the certainty of being vexed and anxious; and the chance of being very unhappy all my life, by the belief that some fifty or a hundred years after I am dead, there will be somewhat less of folly or wretchedness among the bigots of Spain, or the boors of Russia. One reads and thinks so much of past ages, and extends the scale of our combinations so far beyond the rational measure of our actual interest in events, that it is difficult not to give way now and then to that illusion. But I laugh at myself ten times a day for yielding to it; and have no doubt that when my days come to a close, I shall find it but a poor consolation for the sum of actual suffering I have come through.

I know you think all this damnable heresy. But I cannot see things in any other light when I look calmly upon them; and I really fancy I am a very calm observer, &c.

For God's sake get me a reviewer who can write a taking style. Suggest some good topics and ideas to me, and believe me always, most affectionately yours.

72.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 13th February 1816.

My dear Allen—I am extremely obliged to you for your letter, and wish you had made it twice as long. I am sorry though that you will not do Sismondi, and cannot well admit your apology, as I am almost certain that he will ultimately fall into the hands of somebody who does not know so much of the matter as you do. There is something delightful in the perfect candour with which you speak of your own prepossessions on the subject of French politics; and there has always been so much temperance, and true philanthropy, in all your speculations, that I most gladly trust you with that as any other subject, did I not conceive it to be already engaged, &c.

The article on reform, I should be extremely gratified by your doing. I engage the subject to you, and am sure that both we and our readers will be delighted by the change of hand. The new condition of English society, both by the great increase of taxes and establishments, the general diffusion of information, accompanied by an apparent suspension or extinction of all sorts of political enthusiasm, and the new character and tone, whether accidental or natural, that has been assumed of late years by ministers and by Parliament, all afford topics of interesting and profound speculation. Upon which I am satisfied you could easily give us many views of the highest importance. Pray, do that good

service to us and the country, and tell me that I shall have your manuscript very early in March.

I thank you for your remarks on my French article. I daresay it is wrong to name the Duke of Orleans so plainly; but I own I felt a desire to set the example of speaking quite freely and plainly of foreign politics. Since we were obliged to be a little cautious to our own, it would be a miserable and degrading thing if, after all the ingratitude and selfishness of foreign courts, Englishmen should be dragooned into the necessity of "hinting faults, and hesitating dislike" where any of our allies are concerned; and one great risk of this formidable alliance is, to give a pretext for such slavishness. For this reason I rejoice extremely at the plain terms in which Brougham and Tierney have spoken of Ferdinand in the House, and I hope the spirit will be kept up. We are enough abused already to entitle us to speak with perfect freedom of other nations at home. Do write me soon, and believe me always most faithfully yours.

73.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Craigcrook, September 1816.

. . . . . .

I am in the middle of a review at this moment, and, as usual, in great perplexity and huge indignation at the perfidy of my associates. Playfair is in Italy, and so is Brougham. My excellent Horner is here, I am sorry to say, in a very distressing state of

health. I fear it will be necessary for him to spend the winter abroad, and that is always a fearful necessity for an English constitution. I do not know another individual so much to be lamented, on public and on private grounds. He is one of those I should have been most proud to have shown you; one of those which your world has not yet produced, and for the sake of whom we must always look upon that world with some degree of dislike and disdain. I wish I could think that you could but see him. But there is no help. I have no politics to lecture you upon. The King, you see, has at last dissolved his chamber of *ultras;* and, late as it is, it is the wisest thing he has done since his accession. If he is serious, and can get people to believe that he is, and can continue to live a little longer, things may go tolerably yet; but I have no serious hope of French liberty, and shall be satisfied if they do not go mad and bite their neighbours as they did before. You know, I suppose, that Simond has become an ultra, and goes about saying that as the two parties can never coalesce, the one must put down the other by force, and that the French like to be ruled by force, and that the safest party to trust with that power is the Royalist. This, I think, is the sum of his present creed; and he answers all sorts of arguments by repeating it over and over, without the least variation, as devoutly as a monk. I assure you it is quite diverting to hear him. His old indifferency was more respectable; but if this amuses him more, he is right to indulge it. How have peace

and war left your parties? Are your democrats still in the ascendant, or have they reached their meridian and beginning to decline? They will do so if you have patience and let them alone, &c. God bless you.—Most affectionately yours.

74.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 20th December 1816.

My dear Allen—As to parliamentary reform and the progress of our constitution, my opinions are already on record; and you can judge whether I am too vain in saying that I think they coincide more exactly with yours than with those of any other person with whom I have communicated. Thinking them therefore not only true, but of considerable importance, you cannot doubt that I must be extremely gratified to have them supported by the clear and temperate reasoning, and the overpowering weight of accurate knowledge, with which you could adorn them. As to Bonaparte, I have never hated him much, since he has lost his power to do mischief. I suppose I hated him before, chiefly because I feared him, and thought he might do me a mischief. But I never believed that a creature upon whom so much depended could be an ordinary man. I was struck at the first reading with the fairness of Warden's book, though it is a little shallow, scanty, and inconsistent; but I am disposed to treat a fallen sovereign with all sort of courtesy, and certainly to insult him less than when in the plenitude

of his power. I like to think well of the few people one *must* think about, and should really feel obliged to any one who could make me admire or love this singular being a little more than I can even yet bring myself to do. His magnanimity and equanimity,—his talents and courage, and even his self command, I am not inclined to question. But he had a *heart*, I think, of ice and adamant; and I own I cannot bear to think that those who knew and loved *Fox* should have any tenderness towards him. I cannot agree that he had *any* princely virtues, low as these are in the scale of ethics. He was a chief much more in the style of *Frederick* than of Henri IV.; and I must hate all the tribe. But I hate still more the poor sycophants who would deny him what he is entitled to, and should be proud myself to do him noble justice in opposition to their servile clamours. You will oblige me infinitely by undertaking this, either along with, or instead of, your other theme, &c.

I think I won't be up before February. Pray make my peace with Lady Holland, and tell her I am coming round to her sentiments,—slowly and cautiously indeed, like a man who consults his conscience, but surely and steadily,—and that I think we shall make a pilgrimage to St. Helena together.—Ever most truly yours.

75.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq., New York.*

London, 17th February 1817.

My dear Friend—Charlotte's indefatigable and dutiful pen has, I daresay, already informed you of my having been now three weeks away from her in this profligate city, &c.

I live chiefly with the opposition; but our party feelings do not interfere so much with our private friendships as in some other countries, and least of all, I think, in London, and with persons at the head of their parties. When I was last in town, I dined one day at Lord Aberdeen's, where a Frenchman was excessively astonished to see Lord Holland and the Lord President of the Council come to the door in the same *hackney coach.* I am not sure whether the baseness of the vehicle, or the strange assortment of the cargo, amazed him the most; and I suspect an American would have wondered very nearly as much. I saw a good deal of Frere, and a little of Canning; neither of whom appeared to me very agreeable, though certainly witty and well bred. There is a little pedantry, and something of the conceited manner of a first-form boy, about both. Among the young Whigs I think Lord Morpeth the most distinguished, and likely to rise highest. With great ambition, he unites singular correctness of judgment, and a modesty of manner which, in spite of a commanding presence, and all the noble airs of the Howards and Cavendishes, I have no doubt would be set down for awkwardness by a beau

of New York. I met Burdett once or twice, who is very mild and agreeable in private society; but, though he was then coquetting with the ———, I saw enough to be quite certain that he never will be tractable or serviceable for anything but mischief. Tierney is now the most weighty speaker in the House of Commons, and speaks admirably for that House. Brougham is the most powerful, active, and formidable. Canning is thought to be falling off, and certainly has the worst of it in all their encounters.

As to plots and rebellions, I confess I am exceedingly sceptical. There is no doubt a very general feeling of discontent, and something which, without judicious watching and restraint, might lead to local riots and disorders, and occasion the shedding of some foolish blood, but I am persuaded that it is not impatience of oppression, but *want* that is at the bottom of it; and that if they had good employment again, they would soon cease to talk of reform. It is very right to take even excessive precaution, but I cannot bring myself to believe that it was necessary to suspend the constitution in order to keep the peace. Indeed, the general feeling seems now to be so much against these violent measures, that I should look with confidence for their abolition in July, were it not so difficult to get houses at that season, that in general the ministers may do what they please. The greatest calamity which the country has suffered is in the loss of my admirable friend Horner. He died about six weeks ago at Pisa. I never looked for any other catastrophe;

but the accounts which had come home very recently before had excited great hopes in many of his friends. I have not known any death in my time which has occasioned so deep and so general a regret, nor any instance in which there has been so warm and so honourable a testimony from men of all parties to the merits of a private individual. Pray read the account of what passed in the House on moving the new writ for his borough, and confess that we are nobler, more fair, and generous in our political hostility, than any nation ever was before. It is really quite impossible to estimate the loss which the cause of liberal and practical opinions has sustained by this death. That of Fox himself was less critical or alarming; for there is no other person with such a union of talent and character to succeed him. I for my part have lost the kindest friend, and the most exalted model, that ever any one had the happiness of possessing. This blow has quite saddened all the little circle in which he was head, and of which he has ever been the pride and the ornament; but it is too painful to say more on such a subject, &c.

By the way, I wanted to let you understand a little more of my doctrine as to the bad effects of indulgence, which I think you somewhat misapprehend; but I have n't time at present, and perhaps I may take occasion to set down half a page in the Review on that subject. In the meantime, I think you must see at once that those who have never been accustomed to submit to privations or incon-

veniences, will find it more difficult
it becomes a duty, than those to whom
fices have been familiar. Young people w
been habitually gratified in all their desires wil
only indulge in more capricious desires, but will infallibly take it more amiss when the feelings or happiness of others require that they should be thwarted, than those who have been practically trained to the habit of subduing and restraining them, and, consequently, will in general sacrifice the happiness of others to their own selfish indulgence. To what else is the selfishness of princes and other great people to be attributed? It is in vain to think of cultivating principles of generosity and beneficence by mere exhortation and reasoning. Nothing but the *practical habit* of overcoming our own selfishness, and of familiarly encountering privations and discomfort on account of others, will ever enable us to do it when it is required. And *therefore* I am firmly persuaded that indulgence *infallibly* produces selfishness and hardness of heart, and that nothing but a pretty severe discipline and control can lay the foundation of a firm and magnanimous character, &c.

Give my best love to all your family and to Eliza. I shall write often to you during the vacation, as I expect to be mostly at home, and to live a quiet domestic life. We shall go to Craigcrook in ten days if the weather be good. It is bright now, but rather cold. God bless you ever, my dear friend.—Most affectionately yours.

76.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 14th March 1817.

My dear Allen—I could not write to you with any comfort during the hurry of the session; indeed after the sad news of poor Horner's death I had not the heart to address anything to you, either upon that or upon indifferent subjects. On the former there is nothing new to be said. Strangers have already said all that even friends could desire,—and it seems enough to be one of the public to feel the full weight of this calamity. What took place in Parliament seems to me extremely honourable to the body; nor do I believe that there is, or ever was, a great divided political assembly where so generous and just a testimony could have been borne unanimously to personal merit, joined especially as it was in that individual, with a stern and unaccommodating disdain of all sorts of baseness or falsehood. It is also another national trait, not less honourable I think to all parties, that so great a part of the eulogium of a public man, and in a public assembly, should have been made to rest on his domestic virtues and private affections. His parents bear this great calamity far better than I thought they would. Even the first shock was less overwhelming than might have been apprehended; and now they are sensibly soothed and occupied with the condolences of his numerous friends. I wish some memorial of such a life could be collected. In particular, I think many of his letters would be valuable. But knowing

how much our present feelings are likely to mislead us on such occasions, I am satisfied that nothing of a public nature should be thought of for a considerable time. It has occurred to me that a short notice and character might be inserted in the Supplement to the Encyclopædia when it reaches his name. This will not be, I believe, for a year or fifteen months yet, so that there will be time enough to consider of it. The history of such a progress I really think would be a most instructive reading for the many aspiring young men into whose hands that publication is likely to come.

Now let me say one word to you about reviewing, &c.—Very faithfully yours.

77.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 27th March 1817.

My dear Allen—It is very kind of you to undertake a review for me on any terms, and it would be most ungrateful in me to urge you much as to time. Will three weeks from this date do for you? By that time I hope to be far on with the printing, but to be a week or a fortnight more if you require it. I foresee I shall be interrupted myself with those unhappy state trials,* and am likely enough to be the latest of the whole. Pray be as popular as you can, consistently with being rational; and be most angry at the knaves, and compassionate of the fools. One argument you will naturally consider

* The trials of Edgar, Mackinlay, &c. at Edinburgh.

at large. I mean the favourite one of Southey and the rest, that the power of the *people* has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished, and that the little addition made to the influence of the crown by the war and taxes is but a slight counterbalance to that increase. Now the great fallacy here is, that the increase of weight on the side of the people consists chiefly in an increase of intelligence, spirit, and activity, and the mere wealth and influence of a selfish kind can never be either safely or properly set against this sort of power and authority. In fact, it does not require to be counterbalanced at all; for it leads not to the elevation of the commons merely, but to the general improvement; and is obnoxious, not in any degree to the fair strength and dignity of the crown, but only to its corruption and abuses; and instead of being neutralised by giving more means of abuse and corruption to the crown, it is exasperated and strengthened by it. The natural result of such an increase of popular power is to give more direct efficiency to their agency in the government, and the only way to prevent this change in the state of society from producing disorder is, to make more room for the people in the constitution, not to swell out the bloated bulk of the crown. I have said something to this purpose in the close of a long article on reform, I think on ocassion of Windham's speech; but it now deserves to be brought more into view.

I shall be very proud of being thought worthy of drawing up a short view of Horner's career for

the Encyclopædia. Wishaw will do the longer work with perfect judgment and good taste; but I own I should have wished the task in the hands of one who dealt in a little warmer colouring, and was not quite so severe an artist.—Ever most truly yours.

Is it not *universally* thought among English lawyers that the proceedings in Muir's and Palmer's cases were against law and justice? I am afraid we shall have them referred to now as precedents of weight and binding authority.

78.—*To John Richardson, Esq.*

Craigcrook, 24th July 1817.

My dear R.—I wish you joy of the end of the session, in which I too am rejoicing in my provincial way. Cockburn says you do not intend to come down to us this year—which I think is vicious, and therefore I hope not true. We have your old room for you here, and a new study in progress, to the embellishment of which you may immortalise yourself by contributing. I have also a whole wilderness of roses, and my shrubs are now so tall as not to be easily seen over. Moreover my whole lawn is green with potatoes, and the _____ wood is going down this autumn. If all this will not tempt you, I do not know what we shall do. I have got twelve dozen of old claret in my old cellar, and am meditating upon an ice-house; and I am going to buy a large lot of the old books at Herbertshire;

and my little girl speaks the nicest broad Scotch; and we have as little finery and parade about us as in the old days of poor Jamie Grahame and the Hills. Do come and be jolly for a week or two.

Tell me what Tommy Campbell is about; and what Old Bags says for himself, for not deciding our Queensberry case after all. I am glad to hear that Rutherfurd made a good speech. Pray tell me *how* it was. He is a judicious, ambitious, painstaking fellow. His faults are the very opposite of Clerk's and the old school. I do not know if you are much acquainted with him in private. He is full of honour and right feelings.

We have at length finally demolished the Lord Advocate's state prosecution you will see—and in a way really a little scandalous to the vanquished. I am afraid they will hear more of this hereafter; for I cannot find in my heart either to hate or to think very ill of them; and I believe they will even do less mischief than more vigorous men might do. You see nothing will drive me out of my tolerating and moderate system of politics. Pray remember us most kindly to Mrs. R. and the little ones. God bless you.—Most affectionately yours.

79.—*To Dr. Chalmers.*

Edinburgh, 25th July 1817.

Dear Sir—It is but lately that I knew of your return to your own place, and it is still more lately that I have been so far freed of my professional

avocations as to have leisure for more agreeable duties. It is rather late, I am sensible, to thank you again for the very valuable and important contribution you made to the last number of the Review,* and compliments upon its merits never could have so poor a chance for acceptance as now, when you have just been collecting the tribute of far more weighty applause for still more splendid exertions. I come back, however, to my text, and as I believe I first tempted you to dip your pen in our ink by the prospect of doing an important service to society, so I am not without hopes of inducing you to repeat your contributions by the same powerful consideration. What we have already published has excited great attention, and done, I am persuaded, much good; but those to whom the doctrines are new do not yet sufficiently understand them, and those who are hostile to them, still fancy that they have objections that have not been answered. I am myself quite satisfied that an article on the same subject every quarter, or at least every six months, would be requisite to give fair play to the argument, and to render just views with regard to it, familiar and fair in general conception. And also that by this means the great end might be pretty certainly attained in the course of two or three years. My opinion is that it would be extremely desirable to have another article, defending, explaining, and carrying into practical illustration, the principles suggested in the former, inserted in the number of the

* No. 55, art. 1, on the Causes and Cure of Pauperism.

Review which I expect to put to press in about ten days, and to publish about the end of August; and I venture, under this impression, to ask whether you could possibly undertake this further labour in so good a cause. I am perfectly aware of the magnitude of the request I now make, and therefore I make it plainly and at once—with an assurance that my motives for hazarding it will not be misunderstood, and that nothing I could add in the form of solicitation would be likely to succeed if you can resist your own sense of their urgency

I shall probably be in Glasgow early in the autumn, and shall be much mortified if I am again prevented from gratifying myself by a sight of you. Is there no chance of your being in this neighbourhood while this fine weather lasts? It would be extremely obliging in you to give me a little previous notice of your coming.

In the meantime may I hope to hear from you? Believe me always your obliged and very faithful servant.

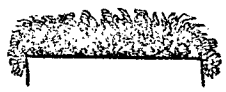
80.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Craigcrook House, 9th May 1818.

My dear Friend—I began my vacation by writing you a long letter, and I shall end it in the same virtuous manner, for we move into town to-morrow, and my labours begin the day after. We have had some idleness and tranquillity here, and about *seven* fine days, but it has been a sad season on the whole, first with cold and then with wet; and as I am lay-

ing down my twelve acres in grass, I have had my fair share of a young farmer's anxieties and mortifications. However, I bear all my trials manfully, and when I cannot be quite resigned I try to make a joke of them. Neither Charley nor I understand much about rain or dirt, and we are both so fond of woodlands and mountains that we have scarcely missed a day without trudging out, and climbing away among mists and showers and craggy places, with scarcely a primrose to cheer us, and nothing but the loneliness and freshness of the scene to put us in good humour. It has long been my opinion that those who have a genuine love for nature and rural scenery, are very easily pleased, and that it is not easy to find any aspect of the sky or the earth from which they will not borrow delight. For my own part, condemned as I am to a great deal of town life, there is something delicious to me in the sound even of a biting east wind among my woods; and the sight of a clear spring bubbling from a rock, and the smell of the budding pines and the common field daisies, and the cawing of my rooks, and the cooing of my cushats, are almost enough for me—so at least I think to-day, which is a kind of parting day for them, and endears them all more then ever. Do not imagine, however, that we have nothing better, for we have now hyacinths, auriculas, and anemonies, in great glory, besides sweet briar, and wallflowers in abundance, and blue gentians and violets, and plenty of rose leaves, though no flowers yet, and apple-blossoms and sloes all around.

I have been enlarging my domain a little, chiefly by getting in a good slice of the wood on the hill, which was formerly my boundary. My field went square up to it before in this way.



Now I have thrown my fence back 100 yards into the wood, so as to hide it entirely, and to bring the wood down into the field; and to do this gracefully, I am cutting deep scoops and bays into it, with the fence buried in the wood. It is a great mass of wood, you will remember, clothing all the upper part of a hill more than a mile long, and 300 feet high; not very old nor fine wood—about forty years old, but well mixed of all kinds, and quite thick and spiry. If you do not understand this you must come and see it, for my pen and pencil can no further go.

Well, but I must leave Craigcrook and this pastoral vein, and condescend to tell you that Charley and the babe are both perfectly well, and so am I, &c. I am rather impatient to make a little money now, and often find myself calculating how soon, at my present rate of saving, I may venture to release myself from the drudgery of my profession, &c. I am sufficiently aware that my gains are in some degree precarious, and, after all, though I please myself with views of retirement and leisure, and travelling and reading, I am by no means perfectly sure that I should be much happier in that state than my present one. Having long set my standard of human felicity at a very moderate pitch, and persuaded myself that men are *considerably* lower than

the angels, I am not much given to discontent, and am sufficiently sensible that many things that appear and are irksome and vexatious, are necessary to help life along. A little more sleep, and a little more time to travel and read, I certainly should like, and be better for; but, placed as I am, I must do the whole task that is appointed for me, or more. And there is some excitement and foolish vanity in doing a great deal, and coming off whole and hearty. God help us, it is a foolish little thing this human life at the best; and it is half ridiculous and half pitiful to see what importance we ascribe to it, and to its little ornaments and distinctions, &c.

We have not heard very lately of the Simonds; they were then at Rome, and talked of going to the Tyrol in spring and summer. I shall never be done lamenting his change of politics. General philanthropy, and a calm distrust and disdain of all actual administrations, was the only thing for him. He has not temper for a partizan, and ceases to be amiable in the heart, at the same time that he becomes a little ridiculous. I am in some hopes, however, that Italy may disgust him with restorations and legitimacy; though I fear he has too much talent not to find apologies for everything. Perhaps I regret his departure from his original creed more, because with a little more toleration for *active* politicians, and a little more faith in the *uses* of faction, it is very nearly my own. Our English politics are not very respectable. This last session of parliament has been, on the whole, humiliating and alarming to

all who care about liberty. The rejection of the Prince's Establishment Act, though quite right in itself, is of little comfort, and only shows that they are personally unpopular, and that the nation will not give *money* to the Government, though it will give everything else. This reminds one of the base times of Henry VII., when the court could command all but the purse of the people. Our degraded state is owing partly, no doubt, to the disunion of the Whigs, and their want of a leader, and to the policy of the Government in choosing blackguards and Jacobins as its *immediate* victims; but the evil is far deeper, and the spirit of the nation pitiably broken. It is no matter.

10*th May*.—I spent all the rest of yesterday, after writing these pages to you, in the open air with Charley alone. We expected some friends to finish our week with us, but luckily they did not come, and we passed the whole day and evening in delightful tranquillity. To-day it is as fine. The larches are lovely; and the sycamores in full flush of rich fresh foliage,—the air as soft as new milk,—and the sky so flecked with little pearly clouds, full of larks, that it is quite a misery to be obliged to wrangle in courts, and sit up half the night over dull papers. We shall come out here, however, every Saturday, so that I am at least as clamorous in my grief as there is any need for.

Remember me most kindly to Fanny and Anne. I am a little mortified that they should think it a

formidable thing to write to me, but perhaps they will have more courage by and by. In the meantime I shall write again to them as soon as I have an instant's leisure.

I am growing a sad defaulter about the Review. Surely I did not say I wrote the Bentham. It is the work of a much greater person, whom I am not at liberty to name, and not one-third of it is mine. Moore is not generally thought overpraised; and I have various letters from his friends, abusing me for it as for a covered attack. He himself does not think so, and has no reason. God bless you. Now, write soon to us.—From most affectionately yours.

81.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Tarbet, 5th August 1818.

My dear Friend—Here we are in a little inn on the banks of Loch Lomond, in the midst of the mists of the mountains, the lakes, heaths, rocks, and cascades, which have been my passion since I was a boy; and to which, like a boy, I have run away the instant I could get my hands clear of law, and review, and Edinburgh. We have been here for four days, and Charlotte is at least as much enchanted with the life we live as I am; and yet it is not a life that most ladies with a spark of *fineness* in them would think very delightful. They have no post-horses in the Highlands, and we sent away those that brought us here, with orders to come back for us to-morrow, and so we are left without a

servant, entirely at the mercy of the natives. The first day we walked about ten miles, over wet heath and slippery rocks, and sailed five or six on the lake in a steam-boat, which surprised us as we were sitting in a lonely wild little bay, sheltering ourselves from a summer shower under a hanging copse. It is a new experiment that for the temptation of tourists. It circumnavigates the whole lake every day in about ten hours; and it was certainly very strange and striking to hear and see it hissing and roaring past the headlands of our little bay, foaming and spouting like an angry whale; but, on the whole, I think it rather vulgarises the scene too much, and I am glad that it is found not to answer, and is to be dropped next year. Well then, the day after, we lounged about an hour or two in the morning, then skimmed across the lake in a little skiff, and took to climbing up the hill in good earnest. This, I assure you, is no fine lady's work. It is 3400 feet high, with an ascent of near five miles, very rough, wet, and rocky in many places; and Charley had fine slipping, and stumbling, and puffing, before she got to the top. However, by the help of the guide's whisky and my own, she got through very safe and proud at last. For more than 2000 feet the air was quite clear, but a thick fog rested on the top, and but for the glory of the thing, we might have stopped where it began. The prospect, however, became very grand and singular before it was quite swallowed up. The whole landscape took a strange silvery skyish tint, from the thin veil of vapour in which

it began to sink; and some distant mountains, on which the sun continued to shine, assumed the most delicate and tender green colour you ever saw, while the water of the lake, with all its islands, seemed lifted up to the level of the eye, and the whole scene to be wavering in the skies, like what is described of the *fata morgana* in Sicily. We all fell twenty times in our descent, and were completely besmeared with mud, which was partly washed away by a fine milky shower which fell upon us as we again crossed over in our boat. The day after, we walked good twelve miles before dinner, up to the wildest and least frequented end of the lake, making various detours, and discovering at every turn the most enchanting views and recesses. In the evening we rowed down the smooth glassy margin of the water to a gentleman's house a mile or two off, and walked home in the twilight. I will not fatigue you by telling you what we have done to-day, but it is nearly as great; and the beauty of it is, that we are perfectly well, and quite delighted with our perseverance; so much so, indeed, that C. declares she will come back earlier next year, and stay twice as long, there being fifty valleys and little lakes that she has marked out for exploring, and which we have not been able to reach. I assure you, you are no loser by these excursions, for neither of us ever see anything very charming but we resolve to bring you to see it; and I, with true Scottish partiality, am always imagining that you will not admire *our* beauties enough, and considering with

what persuasions or reproaches I shall convert you, &c.

Glasgow, 7th.—We got back here yesterday, safe and sound, and had the happiness, among other things, to find your kind letter of the 9th July, &c.

You see I am sending all my treasure to you, and of course my heart will be there too; and I really think my body will one day follow. If I can go on as I am now doing for eight or nine years more, I think I may emancipate myself from the necessity either of working or residing always in this place; and if I were free to move, I rather think that, after a hasty glance at Italy, I should be tempted to take another and far more leisurely survey of America. You, of course, would be my main attraction; but I cannot help taking a very warm and eager interest in the fortunes of your people. There is nothing, and never was anything, so grand and so promising as the condition and prospects of your country; and nothing I conceive more certain than that in seventy years after this its condition will be by far the most important element in the history of Europe. It is very provoking that we cannot live to see it; but it is very plain to me that the French revolution, or rather perhaps the continued operation of the causes which produced that revolution, has laid the foundations, over all Europe, of an inextinguishable and fatal struggle between popular rights and ancient establishments—between democracy and tyranny—between legitimacy and representative government,

which may involve the world in sanguinary conflicts for fifty years, and *may* also end, after all, in the establishment of a brutal and military despotism for a hundred more; but *must* end, I think, in the triumph of reason over prejudice, and the infinite amelioration of all politics, and the elevation of all national character. Now I cannot help thinking that the example of America, and the influence and power which she will every year be more and more able to exert, will have a most potent and incalculably beneficial effect, both in shortening this conflict, in rendering it less sanguinary, and in insuring and accelerating its happy termination. I take it for granted that America, either as one or as many states, will always remain free, and consequently prosperous and powerful. She will naturally take the side of liberty therefore in the great European contest—and while her growing power and means of compulsion will intimidate its opponents, the example not only of the practicability, but of the eminent advantages, of a system of perfect freedom, and a disdain and abjuration of all prejudices, and—(illegible)—cannot fail to incline the great body of all intelligent communities to its voluntary adoption.

These are my anticipations; and is it not a pity that I have no chance of living to see them verified? However, they amuse one very well at present, and perhaps we may be indulged with a peep out of some other world, while they are in a course of fulfilment. One thing, however, is certain, that they, and some other considerations, give me the

greatest possible interest in the prosperity, the honour, and the happiness of your part of the world. I am afraid that my habits, and the tastes in manners, literature, and tone of discussion, until they have hardened, would prevent me from living so happily, on the whole, in America as in this old corrupted world of ours. Indeed, to say the truth, I do not think I could bear to live and die anywhere but in Scotland. But on public grounds I am as much concerned for America as for Scotland, and would rather live there than in any foreign or enslaved portion of the old world, however elegant or refined. There is a long dissertation for you; but the end of it is, that in nine or ten years I shall come and stay a long while with you; and the reasonable result is, that as that is a great deal too long to wait for a meeting, and as you are still older then I, and can still less afford therefore to wait, you must shorten it by coming and staying a long while with us in two or three years at the furthest.—Most affectionately yours.

82.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Glasgow, 5th May 1819.

My dear Friend—I always write you a long letter when I come here; but I have a stronger reason than usual to-day, as we have just got your letters of the 9th April, with all their news and kindness. And first of all, we must congratulate Fanny,*—not certainly on

* Mrs. Jeffrey's sister, afterwards Mrs. Colden.

having a lover, which I suppose has been her case for these ten years past, but on being in love, which is a very delightful novelty, and not a little agreeable when it ceases to be new, as I can say with some assurance, after having been in that state, with little interruption, for near thirty years. As to the youth, it is certainly very fortunate that his character and prospects are such as to please you; and for the little dash of democracy, I confess I am rather glad of it, as I think your intolerance of those worthy citizens is the only illiberal thing about you, and am sure that, with your inherent fairness and good nature, nothing more can be necessary for you to get over it than to be brought into contact and amicable relation with some of the better specimens. *Entre nous,* however, the Life of Fulton is—bad as possible; and after reading it with a design of contradicting the Quarterly, if possible, I ended by agreeing with them. Give my kindest love to Fan. on this occasion, and tell her that if she has half as much genius for matrimony and domestic life as Charlotte, she may venture on it with great safety as soon as she pleases. I am not sure that this event betters our chance of seeing you here, at least, unless you come soon; for though you may be more secure in having the giddiest of your charges safe under the control of a husband, and the rest under that of so sage a matron, still, I am afraid that when there comes to be a litter of American grandchildren (O fie, how indelicate)! the squalls of each of which you know in the dark, your poor little Scotch grand-daughter,

whose sweet little Doric note you never heard in your life, will come to have less attraction, and one's hooping-cough and another's measles will serve grandpapa for an excuse to be lazy and unnatural all the rest of his life. So I would advise you to break off before those new fetters are forged for you, and come away to us sober and married people while the other are too happy to miss you.

We are all pretty well here,—all quite well indeed, except little Charley, &c.

With all my good spirits, I am the most apprehensive and serious being alive; so I daresay I give more importance to these things than they deserve. We shall write again in a week or ten days, when I think she will be quite restored, &c.

I have just got done with another Review. I have more vamping and patching than writing. That of Rogers' little poem and Campbell's specimens are all I have written wholly; though there is more of my hand than there should be in the very long article on the abuse of charities.

I am afraid I said something impertinent to you about that review of Byron. It has some warmth and talent certainly; but the taste is execrable, and there is an utter want of *sense*, which is ruinous to anything of the sort in European judgments. The *mot* in London on the occasion was, that it had lowered the authority of the Review at least twenty per cent. in all matters poetical. But I suppose you are not so sensitive at New York. I hope you have read Mackintosh's paper by this time. There is a great

deal in it applicable to America, and what I think should attract notice among your politicians, if it is not too much above their pitch. I am sorry your congress has disgraced itself by the decision on ——— case. It has thrown you back twenty-five years at least in the estimation of European politicians, raised great doubt as to the expediency of any republican government, and given great plausibility to the doctrine of those who refuse to recognise you as part of the great system of civilised government. A more audacious, ignorant, and *blackguard* determination was never given by a legislative assembly. Nobody has regretted it more than I have done.

The Simonds, I take it, are now at Paris. Louis (Simond) *is* an *ultra*,—a very honest one, I admit, and likely enough to give offence to his followers, but ultra enough to hate and persecute the adherents of a different sort of absolute monarch,—a distruster of liberty, in short; and, under pretence of hating faction and cabal, one who would put down all the movements of a free people, and substitute his own wisdom in place of the wishes of a nation. I really do not know one more *arbitrary* in his principles of government; and he thinks it a sufficient justification that the object is to do them good; which has been the object of some of the most intolerant tyrants that the world ever saw. Fortunately for himself and his country, he has no great chance of having power in it, and is likely enough to be disgusted with those who have. But I will hold an equal bet

that he disapproves of the late proceedings of the ministry. In short, with the best intentions and feelings in the world, he is utterly unfit for practical politics, &c.—Most affectionately yours.

83.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

Minto, 24th August 1819.

My dear Friend—When I left Charlotte last week I promised to write you a long letter before my return, and though I am particularly lazy when I am from home, I have a pleasure in performing my promise. I am on my way back from Brougham, &c.

We are not in a good state in England, and I sometimes fear that tragical scenes may be before us. My notions of parliamentary reform are in the Review; and I am perfectly clear that it would have no effect at all in relieving even present distresses. Yet of late I cannot help doubting whether *some* reform has not become necessary—if it were only to conciliate and convince the people. If they are met only with menaces and violence we shall be drenched in blood, and the result will be a more arbitrary, and oppressive, and despicable government—leading ultimately perhaps to a necessary and salutary, but sanguinary revolution. Our present radical evil is the excess of our productive power—the want of demand for our manufactures and industry; or, in other words, the excess of our population; and for this I am afraid there is no radical remedy but starving out the surplus, horrible as it

is. For emigration can do comparatively nothing; and the excess of production arising, not from any temporary slackness of the natural demand, but from the improvement of machinery and skill, which has enabled one man to do the work of at least 100, and that all over the improved part of the world; and consequently enabled all those who formerly found employment, to produce ten times as much as any possible increase of consumption can take off their hands, it is plainly impossible that it can be cured by any change in our commercial relations. It may seem a strange paradox to mention, but I am myself quite persuaded of its truth, that, in our artificial society, the consequence of those great discoveries and improvements, which render human industry so much more productive, and *should* therefore render all human comforts so much more attainable, must be to plunge the greater part of society into wretchedness, and ultimately to depopulate the countries where they prevail. Nothing but a thorough and levelling *agrarian* law, or the discovery of some means of increasing *food* in the same proportion as other commodities, can avoid this consequence. But we shall *talk* of this when we meet. It is not worth while to write about it.

84.—*To Dr. Chalmers.*

Edinburgh, 21st December 1819.

My dear Sir—I have read your pamphlet* with

* "Considerations on the System of Parochial Schools in Scotland."

great pleasure, and full assent. I cannot say on this occasion that you have made a convert of me, for my sentiments have always been in unison with those which you express, both as to the *peculiar* advantages of our system of parochial education, and as to the causes which have deprived our great towns of most of its benefits. The reasoning in the last six or seven pages of your pamphlet I take to be as sound and convincing as the eloquence with which it is expressed is admirable and touching.

The only thing to be doubted or questioned is, whether the evil has not got to too great a head to be now successfully combated. But zeal and talents like yours have already wrought greater works than this; and it is extremely comfortable to think that the effort is not only not interminable, as you have well remarked, but that even its partial success will be attended with great benefits, and that every school established upon right principles will not only be a pattern and an incitement to others, but will at all events, and of itself, do a great deal of permanent good.

If you should want any extra parochial aid, I shall gladly contribute towards what I consider as a very interesting experiment, and indeed shall at all times think myself both favoured and honoured by having my charity guided by any hints or suggestions of yours.

With the sincerest respect and affection, believe me always your obliged and faithful servant.

85.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

22d February 1821.

My dear Allen—

. . . . . .

I have been rather busy, and rather dissipated, this winter, and have rather neglected the Review; but I must now begin to think of it again. Can you recommend any contributors to me, or any subjects to myself? I have some thoughts of coming up in March or April, though I have been so idle as scarcely to be entitled to such an indulgence. There is some idea of moving the Chancellor to take up the Queensberry appeals immediately, in which case I should probably have a fair apology for my journey.

I am very much ashamed of the Commons, and have but little now to say against the radical reformers; if any reform is worth the risk of such an experiment. The practical question upon which every man should now be making up his mind, is, whether he is for tyranny or revolution; and, upon the whole, I incline towards tyranny; which, I take it, will always be the wise choice for any individual, especially after his youth is over, however it may be for that abstraction called the country, which may very probably be much the better for twenty years' massacres and tumults among its inhabitants. The individual has another resource, too, in emigration, or entire retreat from all political functions and concerns; which would often be very wise and agreeable, if it were not liable to the reproach of baseness

and cowardice. I see nothing comfortable in the state of Europe, and think the great pacification will turn out the beginning of greater contention than those it seemed to have ended. Will mere poverty be able to keep us out of them?

Remember me very kindly to Lord and Lady Holland, and write me a long letter soon.—Ever yours.

86.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq., New York.*

London, 15th April 1821.

My dear Friend—

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We do not allow ourselves, however, to naturalise in London, and are beginning to be impatient for our deliverance and the close of our exile. We have had a racketing feverish life since we came here, with too little quiet and leisure for Charlotte, and almost too little for me. It is difficult, however, to resist the civilities of distinguished people; and a strong persuasion that what is now rather fatiguing will amuse us in recollection, induces us to abandon ourselves to the current, and give up our time to every call that is made on it, &c.

I believe you do not know many of the people we have been living with here, so that it would be tedious to tell you about them. But though they are very kind, and many of them very clever, and almost all very fashionable and fine, I confess this new experiment has confirmed me in my dislike

of a London life, and made me doubly thankful that my lot has been cast in a quieter scene. The constant distractions of politics, and the supreme importance which the business of *the two Houses* assumes in all the high society, is the least of my objections. It is the unmanageable extent of that society, the eternal hurry, the dissipation of thought, and good feeling, and almost of principle, which results from the wearisome and fruitless pursuit of an [*torn*], and that pitiful concern about what is distinguished for fashion and frivolous notoriety, that offends and disgusts a thinking, and even a social, man on his first approach to this great vortex of folly and misery. Charlotte participates in these feelings still more largely than I do, and from not having confidence or animal spirits so strong as mine, is immediately fatigued with what rather amuses me at the beginning, and has lately taken to sleep at home in the evenings, when I go forth to take my observations in the haunts of dissipation, &c.

You will expect me, of course, to say something of politics while I am here at the source of intelligence, and living among leaders of parties, but I had never less inclination, or indeed less to say. I think as ill as ever of the state and prospects of the country, feel less alarm, perhaps, as to speedy or immediate mischief, but not at all less despondency as to the inevitable evils that surround us. The agricultural classes, embracing the old aristocracy, are falling, and must yet fall, into greater poverty and embarrassment; and the wealth of the country

centre more in the less valuable funds of the trading interest, who, upon any alarm, are far more likely to rally round any Government, however oppressive, and to recur to blind and short-sighted violence as a cure for disaffection. Thus the more unpopular, and deservedly unpopular, the Government is, the more zealously will it be supported by the iniquities of a legislature to which such is the passport; and the greater the risk will become of a contest between the equally fatal extremes of a discontented populace and an almost avowed tyranny. The only chance is in the fears of the latter. I do not myself believe that they—that is, the Tory party—will ever be unseated till overthrown by a revolution. But there are indications that, to avoid that extremity, they may tardily and imperfectly adopt of themselves some of those improvements against which they carry triumphant decisions when proposed by their antagonists; and that in this way they may grant a variety of economical reforms, and even perhaps some political ones, in a year or two later, and crippled with more restrictions than would have attended them in the hands of a Whig Government. In this way the Government may be gradually improved without any change of administration, and some salvation perhaps wrought for the principles of liberty, by the necessary diminution of *influence* which must follow the retrenchment of expense. This, however, is the bright side of the picture; and, looking to the fierce and mutual hostility of the populace and the Governments, both at home

and abroad, I confess I think the society of the old world is on the brink of a greater and more dreadful commotion than it has ever before experienced. The catastrophe of Naples is sad and humiliating, but the spirit of disaffection and resistance is not to be repressed, and I very much fear cannot long be repressed even in France, where I am firmly of opinion that it will produce the most mischievous effects.

We have had a sort of project of running over to Paris for a week, if detained here over the holidays, but I am afraid it is too daring and sudden for our ladies,—at least we shall see, &c.—Believe me, very affectionately yours.

87.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq., New York.*

Edinburgh, 27th January 1822.

My dear Friend—I take Charley's* place this time as the writer of our monthly dispatch; not entirely, I am sorry to say, because I have either more leisure than usual, or more agreeable or important intelligence to communicate, but because the said Charlotte is not well enough to write easily for herself, &c.

I go on as usual; rather less business at the bar, and more notoriety away from it. I have had two overtures to take a seat in Parliament, but have given a peremptory refusal, from taste as well as prudence. I am not in the least ambitious,

* Charlotte—Mrs. Jeffrey.

and feel no desire to enter upon public life in such a moment as the present, &c.

I think the prospects of all the old world bad enough at this moment, both for peace and ultimate freedom. The odds are that we have revolutionary wars all over the continent again in less than two years, and our only chance of keeping out of them is our miserable poverty, and even on that I do not rely. But the worst is, that I am not at all sanguine as to the result, either immediate or ultimate, being in favour of liberty. It is always a duty to profess in public an entire reliance on the ultimate prevalence of reason and justice, because such doctrines help powerfully to realize themselves; but in my heart I am far from being such an optimist; and looking at the improved intelligence of despotic governments, and the facilities which the structure of society affords to the policy of keeping nations in awe by armies, I confess I do not think it unlikely that we shall go with our old tyrannies and corruptions for 4000 or 5000 years longer. When or how is the government of Russia to be liberalised?—and if they unite and bind themselves with Prussia and England in a holy alliance to keep down what they call treason and rebellion in other countries, what means of resistance can the people of such countries ever acquire? The true hope of the world is with you in America; in your example now, and in fifty years more I hope, your influence and actual power. And yet I am accused of being unjust to Americans. At home things are very bad. The King, out of

humour with his ministers, on grounds that do them no dishonour, has a rooted horror at all liberal opinions; and the Duke of York, with more firmness and cold blood, is still more bigotted. The body of the people, again, are so poor, and their prospects so dismal, that it is quite easy to stir them up to any insane project of reform; and the dread of this makes timid people rally round those who are for keeping order by force, and neutralises the sober influence of the Whigs. Our only chance is in the extremity of our financial embarrassments, which will force such retrenchments on the ministry as at once to weaken their powers of corruption, and to lend credit to those whose lessons they have so long contemned, and must now stoop to follow. I scarcely think Parliament will venture on a renewal of the property tax, but I do not think it impossible that they may be driven to reduce the interest of the funds, though that would raise a great outcry, and justly.

Tell me about your children. What is Horace doing, and W———. I will write soon again to Fanny. It is a great delight to hear of the continued health and long youth of your old ladies. Pray remember me to them most affectionately, &c. God bless you.—Very affectionately yours.

88.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq.*

London, 13th April 1822.

My dear Friend—Here I am alone in this huge

heartless place; and so alone and home sick that it is a great relief to be allowed to write to any body who really cares for me. I am come again upon a great appeal case; and Charlotte, who is in the middle of her gardening, and all day long tying up hyacinths and propping carnations, like Eve in Paradise, positively refused to come with me. Though we hurried up in three days, we have been three days here waiting for our case coming on, and are likely to wait as many days more, and it will last eight days hearing I have no doubt, and I shall scarcely get down for our term on the 12th of May, and not at all to Craigcrook again for any part of the vacation. By what I can see and hear, things are in no very good way, and scarcely even safe. Great discontent, and great distrust, not merely of Government, but of all public men, in the body of the people; great intolerance and obstinacy on the part of the ministers, and no very cordial union among the members of the parliamentary opposition. Last year the success and industry of Hume made a sort of coalition between the thorough Reformers, and the moderate constitutional Whigs; but they cannot stand two sessions of estimate, and are beginning to draw off from him; which not only weakens them every way, but still more materially strengthens the ministry. There will be some little retrenchment, and in that way some small diminution of influence; but the general poverty and extravagance of all the upper classes will make the remaining patronage go as far in the way of corrup-

tion, as it used to do before it was diminished in more prosperous times. I rather think we are tending to a revolution, steadily though slowly—so slowly, that it may not come for fifty years yet; but capable of being accelerated by events that are not at all improbable. The most disgusting peculiarity of the present times is the brutal scurrility and personality of the party press, originally encouraged by ministers, though I believe they would now gladly get rid of it; but from their patronage, and the general appetite for scandal, it has now become too lucrative a thing to be sacrificed to their hints, and goes on, and will go on, for the benefit, and at the pleasure, of the venal wretches who supply it.

I have seen but few people yet since I came up, the holidays being just over, and the good company scarcely returned to town yet. I called to-day on Washington Irving, and on Miss Edgeworth, but was not lucky enough to find either of them; but we are sure of meeting, and I will write again to tell you what I think of them. I have been sitting or walking most of the morning with poet Campbell, and with Mackintosh.

I got out a nice number of the Review just before I left home, and directed an early copy to be forwarded to you. I am afraid you will think it heavy. I write nothing myself but Lord Byron,* to whom I have at last administered a little cruel medicine, and a part of Demosthenes, not the translations.

I hope Fanny is quite well. I wrote her a bit

* No. 72, art. 7.

of a letter not long ago, and want to provoke her to write to me. It will do her health a great deal of good, and give me much pleasure. I will insult her with another letter I think before I leave London. It has been very cold for two or three weeks till a few days ago, and now it is very warm. The park trees green with buds rather than leaves, and the grass quite luxurious. Nothing in the universe can be so bright, pure, and soft; all the sloes and almond trees in blossom, and all the fields alive with lambs, and the sky echoing with larks. I assure you England is delightful in spring. Yet I am longing sadly to be home again. What I miss most in London are the four or five houses into which you can go at all hours, and the seven or eight women with whom you are quite familiar, and with whom you can go and sit and talk at your ease, dressed or undressed, morning or evening, whenever you have any leisure, or indisposition to be busy. Here I have only visiting acquaintances, at least among that sex, and that does not suit or satisfy me. I am going to dress for dinner now, and shall not finish this till to-morrow.—God bless you.

Saturday, 20th.—I have been a good part of the morning with Chantrey, who has some beautiful things. I wished much for you while I was in his gallery. His busts and children are admirable, but I do not much like either his full statues or his designs in relief. He is a strange blunt fellow himself; and in his workshop I met another curiosity—

a Scottish poet—no contemptible imitator of Burns, who is a sort of overseer for Chantrey, and is trusted with all his business.* He was bred a carpenter, but being, like most of my countrymen, well educated, he wandered up to London, and set about reporting debates for the newspapers, but, being a strict Whig, he grew so impatient of the baseness he was obliged to set down, that he came to Chantrey, who is a bit of a Whig also, and said he would rather sweep his shop for him than go on with such drudgery; and now he is his right hand man, and has invented various machines of great use and ingenuity. I shall send you a volume of his poetry, to let you see what universal geniuses come out of Scotland.

It is beautiful weather, and I divert myself with varieties of talk and spectacles; but for all that, weary sadly for my wife and child, and wake half a dozen times in the night with a heavy heart, to find myself alone.

I have not had time yet to call on your fair cousin, Miss De P., but I fancy you will forgive me for that omission. I think I shall go down to Malthus with Mackintosh this day week. I understand he is quite well, and I hope to hear a nightingale. I was surprised this morning to run against my old friend Tommy Moore, who looks younger, I think, than when we met at Chalk Farm some sixteen years ago. His embarrassments, I understand, are nearly settled now, and he may again inhabit this

* Allan Cuningham.

country. I am to dine with him the day after to-morrow.

Is the *Rush* who is here as your minister the same man whom I sat beside at Madison's table, and to whom I addressed that polite letter before sailing, which you had the clownishness to abuse as a piece of flattery? If he is, I think I must renew my acquaintance with him. I suppose Irvine will be able to tell me, and it would be rather more sensible to ask him than you for my present purpose. I know nothing of Simond or his book. The travels, I daresay, will be good; but the history will not do, though it has cost him fifty times more labour. I wish he would come over here for a while. Will you think me very romantic if I tell you that I took a long lonely walk to-day all over the Park and Kensington Gardens, in the very track in which I walked with Charlotte the last time I saw her before her return to America? and all through the street, and up to the door of the house in Woodstock Street, where she then lodged, and where I took my farewell of her. That is now ten years ago, and I am not much altered, I think, since that time. London, I think, looks less and more empty than usual, though we had a good levee yesterday, and ten carriages were demolished in the press. People complain that the King sees nobody, but is always either shut up with a few women and blackguard favourites, or figuring at a few gala days, where every body passes before him as fast as they can trot. He is well enough in health I believe, but very fat, nervous,

and lazy, and cannot be long-lived. I am sorry about the bank; but if the storm advances on you, you must just fly before it. Go to Bloomingdale by all means; it will do you a vast deal of good. I told you that I liked your American novel; but I am a very lenient critic, and can by no means answer for his success here. Indeed he makes too lavish a use of extreme means—he is always in agonies.—Very affectionately yours.

89.—*To Mrs. Colden, New York.*

(A sister of Mrs. Jeffrey.)

Mardocks, 6th May 1822.

My dear Fanny—I am on my way back to Scotland, after a three weeks' exile in London, and take the leisure of this fine summer morning to write you a long letter. I hope you are sensible of the compliment I pay you in taking this vast sheet of paper, which, to make it the more gracious, I have stolen from the quire on which my host, Sir James Mackintosh, is now writing his history.

I have been very much amused in London, though rather too feverishly; so that it is deliciously refreshing to get out of its stir and tumult, and sit down to recollect all I have seen and heard, amidst the flowers' freshness and nightingales of this beautiful country. I was a good deal among wits and politicians, of whom you would not care much to hear. But I also saw a good deal of Miss Edgeworth and Tommy Moore, and something of your

countryman, Washington Irving, with whom I was very happy to renew my acquaintance. Moore is still more delightful in society than he is in his writings; the sweetest-blooded, warmest-hearted, happiest, hopefulest, creature that ever set fortune at defiance. He was quite ruined about three years ago by the treachery of a deputy in a small office he held, and forced to reside in France. He came over, since I came to England, to settle his debts by the sacrifice of every farthing he had in the world, and had scarcely got to London when he found that the whole scheme of settlement had blown up, and that he must return in ten days to his exile. And yet I saw nobody so sociable, kind, and happy; so resigned, or rather so triumphant over fortune, by the buoyancy of his spirits, and the inward light of his mind. He told me a great deal about Lord Byron, with whom he had lived very much abroad, and of whose heart and temper, with all his partiality to him, he cannot say anything very favourable. There is nothing gloomy or bitter, however, in his ordinary talk, but rather a wild, rough, boyish pleasantry, much more like nature than his poetry.

Miss Edgeworth I had not seen for twenty years, and found her very unlike my recollection.

Have you any idea what sort of thing a truly elegant English woman of fashion is? I suspect not; for it is not to be seen almost out of England, and I do not know very well how to describe it. Great quietness, simplicity, and delicacy of manners, with a certain dignity and self-possession that puts vul-

garity out of countenance, and keeps presumption in awe; a singularly sweet, soft, and rather low, voice, with remarkable elegance and ease of diction; a perfect taste in wit and manners and conversation, but no loquacity, and rather languid spirits; a sort of indolent disdain of display and accomplishments; an air of great good nature and kindness, with but too often some heartlessness, duplicity, and ambition. These are some of the traits, and such, I think, as would most strike an American. You would think her rather cold and spiritless; but she would predominate over you in the long run; and indeed is a very bewitching and dangerous creature, more seductive and graceful than any other in the world; but not better nor happier; and I am speaking even of the very best and most perfect. We have plenty of loud, foolish things, good humoured even in the highest society.

Washington Irving is rather low spirited and silent in mixed company, but is agreeable, I think, *tête à tête*, and is very gentle and amiable. He is a good deal in fashion, and has done something to deserve it. I hope you do not look on him in America as having flattered our old country improperly. I had the honour of dining twice with a royal Duke, very jovial, loud, familiar, and facetious, by no means foolish or uninstructed, but certainly coarse and indelicate to a degree quite remarkable in the upper classes of society. The most extraordinary man in England is the man in whose house I now am.

I came down here yesterday by way of Hayleybury, where I took up Malthus, who is always delightful, and brought him here with me. The two professors have gone over to the College to their lectures, and return to dinner. I proceed on my journey homewards in the evening. Would you like to know what old England is like? and in what it most differs from America? Mostly, I think, in the visible memorials of antiquity with which it is overspread; the superior beauty of its verdure, and the more tasteful and happy state and distribution of its woods. Everything around you here is *historical*, and leads to romantic or interesting recollections. Grey grown church towers, cathedrals, ruined abbeys, castles of all sizes and descriptions, in all stages of decay, from those that are inhabited to those in whose moats ancient trees are growing, and ivy mantling over their mouldered fragments. Within sight of this house, for instance, there are the remains of the palace of Hunsden, where Queen Elizabeth passed her childhood, and Theobalds, where King James had his hunting seat, and the *Rye-house* where Rumbald's plot was laid, and which is still occupied by a maltster—such is the permanency of habits and professions in this ancient country. Then there are two gigantic oak stumps, with a few fresh branches still, which are said to have been planted by Edward the III., and massive stone bridges over lazy waters; and churches that look as old as Christianity; and beautiful groups of branchy trees; and a verdure like nothing else in

the universe; and all the cottages and lawns fragrant with sweet briar and violets, and glowing with purple lilacs, and white elders; and antique villages scattering round wide bright greens; with old trees and ponds, and a massive pair of oaken stocks preserved from the days of Alfred. With you everything is new, and glaring, and angular, and withal rather frail, slight, and perishable; nothing soft and mellow and venerable, or that looks as if it would ever become so. I will not tell you about Scotland after this. It has not these characters of ancient wealth and population, but beauties of another kind which you must come and see.

I have pined very much in my absence from it, and in my divorce from Charley and my child, though I get a letter from them every second day, and find they are well and happy. The little one is a very nice babe. I wish you could see her; very quick and clever certainly, but, what is much better, very kind hearted, compassionate, and sweet tempered, and delightfully happy all day long. You may laugh if you please, but I say all this is literally true, and she is not a bit spoiled, not she,—and accordingly she is a universal favourite among all sorts of people, which a spoiled child never was since the world began. I wrote a long letter to your father after I came to London. I have not since heard anything as to the Cochranes, but understand the admiral is better, though by no means well or comfortable. I have done everything about Mrs. Shaw that he desired. Write me a long letter

soon, and tell me about Anne especially. Is she sensible, as well as merry, or given to fall in love, or to flirt? (which is not at all the same thing.) Is she domestic, or giddy and dissipated? Does she read any, or ride? In short, tell me what she does, and what she likes to do. I have a great passion for her, as I recollect her, and want not to fancy her different from the reality. Tell me now, too, about good Mrs. M'Adam, and grandmamma. You do not know how often and how kindly we talk of you all, and how little your absence has loosened the ties which bound us together.

I was very much shocked at reading the accounts of the loss of one of your packets. It seems to lessen the chance of our meeting, and enlarge the barrier betwixt us; though that is nonsense too, as the actual danger is neither greater nor less. I have heard nothing of Simond for a long time, but I have just seen a copy of his book—two enormous thick volumes; but I have not had time yet to read any of it. It is not yet to be bought indeed in London. I suppose I shall find a copy when I get home. It is as warm to-day as our summer generally is, and nothing is so delicious as this early heat. The dust is parching, but everything dewy, and fragrant, and fresh. All the leaves are now out, but the oaks indeed scarcely quite out yet. In Scotland I fear our branches are still bareish, though our spring, I understand, has been rather more forward than usual. Charlotte has resumed her riding with the fine weather, and is become exceedingly popular and

hospitable in my absence. She is at Craigcrook, and seems to be keeping open house. I really think she has grown more agreeable within the last two years; she likes more people, and feels more intensely the pleasure of making others happy. You will laugh at this too, I suppose, and think I am falling into my dotage. No matter; see whether Mr. Colden will say as much of you after nine years' marriage. Remember me very kindly to him, and all the worthy democrats of your acquaintance. I reverence them very much, and think they have good cause to be proud of their handiwork. I hope you are now quite well, and active, and popular. What is your favourite pursuit? and what sort of people do you like most to live with? Are you tired of music yet? That will come you know; and it is better that you should tire of it before your husband does. God bless you, my dear Fan.—Very affectionately yours.

90.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq., New York.*

Edinburgh, 22d September 1822.

My dear Friend—

. . . . . .

I have at last sent you the picture, and have been generous enough to let you have the original, which I hope you will admire as much as it deserves. It is very like the child,* though it gives a very inadequate idea of her animation, or of the sunny

* His daughter.

sweet expression which is the general ornament of her features. It went to Liverpool more than three weeks ago, and by a letter from Kennedy I find it was sent off early in this month, so at all events I think you must receive it before this reach you. We just got home to receive your letter of the 14th August, with the statement of my money, for which I thank you, &c.

Simond wrote from Berne to announce his marriage. He seems very happy. I rather like his book. I mean the journey; for I really have not been able to see the history. It is obviously a failure in an attempt to condense a vast mass of dull matter into a moderate compass. The consequence of which is, that the dulness is increased in proportion to the density, and the book becomes ten times more tedious by its compression. This is not a paradox now, but a simple truth; for the reader has not time in those brief notices to get acquainted with the persons, or to take an interest in the events; whereas the very copiousness of a full historical detail begets a familiarity which grows up insensibly to a regard. I have always said that Clarissa Harlow and Sir C. Grandison owe all their attraction to their length; and it is quite certain that *an abstract* of either would be illegible. And it is just the same with *true* histories, if there be any such thing. However, the whole work is very respectable, and I meditate a review of it. There is a number just out which you will have got before you get this, and of which I have but little to say. I have been lazy,

and wrote only Nigel, and part of the first article. The most remarkable book that is noticed is O'Meara's Bonaparte; to me the most interesting publication that has appeared in our times. It has made a great sensation both in this country and in Paris, and no one doubts its authenticity, or that it is a faithful account of what Bonaparte did say. The petty squabbles with Sir H. Lowe take up far too much of it, and should be left out of the next edition; though it is easy to see that America thinks that the most interesting part of the work. Though there is much rashness, and probably some falsehood, in those imperial lucubrations, they seem to me to shew infinite talent, and make a nearer approach to magnanimity and candour than I at all expected. I am curious to hear what you think of them, &c.

Pray give my kindest love to Mrs. W., and your admirable old ladies, who are perfect patterns to grow old by; and to Fanny and my dear little Anne, for whom I have so many kisses in store.

God bless you and make you all happy.—Ever very affectionately yours.

91.—*To his Niece, Miss Brown.*

Cathedral Church of Basle, 13th August 1823.

My dear Harriet—What do you think of that for a place to write from? I doubt whether there was ever a letter written in it before. But the heat is so intolerable everywhere else, that having experienced the delicious feeling of coolness when we came here

to see it, I bethought myself of asking leave to come back and write in it, which the worthy sexton—as this is a free Protestant city, and above Popish prejudices—thought very reasonable. So I am now sitting in the middle of the choir, with the tomb of Erasmus beside me, the hall of the famous council at my back, and the ashes of a hundred Helvetic warriors of old renown under my feet.

I wrote to you I think from Mentz, or from some place thereabouts. We have come on very well ever since, till the heat overtook us the day before yesterday, and one of the crane necks of our perch broke last night, by which disaster we laid by a whole day till it can be repaired. If the heat lasts, however, we must travel by night and sleep in the day, though that will be a little difficult between two feather beds, which is the usual accommodation in this country. The Rhine, which we have regained, is much improved since we parted, having lost much of his mud, and pours down rain in a fine sea-green torrent, roaring and surging in a free manly voice from between the mountains of the Jura and those of the Black Forest, which lie both before us. We got the first peep of the snowy Alps yesterday, but at a great distance, ranging like low white clouds over a distant upland. There are six or seven peaks in sight at once, 100 miles off, I daresay, but very imposing and majestical. We have lost them again by drawing nearer to the intervening heights, but shall probably see them again to-morrow, and next day hope to be among them. We go from this place

to Schaffhausen, and then on to Zurich, where we part,—Mr. Wilkes and the women going direct to Geneva, and we three free men of the forest taking across to St. Gothard to Venice, and what not. We reassemble at Geneva about the 5th of September, and I wish you would *immediately* write to that place, as it takes about sixteen days to go, and I shall not remain above a week. I think I described the rocky and castling rise of the Rhine to you. After that we *skirted* a long range of woody hills for near 100 miles, about as high as the Ochils, but covered with wood to the top, vineyards at the bottom, and on the slope villagers' houses in old walnut groves and orchards; on the opposite side a vast plain, blackened now and then by forest, and bordered at a great distance by skyish mountains fifty miles off—something resembling in their form the west end of the Campsie hills when seen five miles off. The German towns are very handsome, and even magnificent, but have a despotic appearance, and swarm with whiskered soldiers and drums, and are troublesome about passports and baggage. I keep a journal, where everything worthy of remembrance is recorded, and you shall be allowed to read it for the small charge of one penny; so I avoid particulars here. We are all here quite well, &c.

I had a letter here from Mr. Morehead, the only one we have got since leaving home. We think very often of you all, and wish ourselves back with you again; for, after all, travelling is pleasanter when it is over than while it is going on. We have

laid in materials that may serve us all for lying for the rest of our lives. We have agreed very well,—Cockburn being despotic, and the rest of us dutifully obedient. Farewell, my dear Harriet, &c.—Believe me always, very affectionately yours.

92.—*To Miss Brown.*

Venice, 25th August 1823.

My dear Harriet—Here we are at last, at the end of our journey, and with nothing but a *return* before us. It requires to be as far from home as I am, and to love it as well, to understand the comfort there is in *that*. Yet we have come on charmingly, except that we have been bothered eternally about passports, and are almost dissolved into a dew with heat. That last is indeed a serious evil, and I bear it worse than I expected, especially in the night; for though I sleep under a single sheet, there is no lying still for it, and I am up half a dozen times washing myself with water and eau de Cologne. The skin, too, is off both my ears, and is coming off my nose, and all this in sight of the snowy Alps. It is very shocking.

I have written you three letters on my journey, but I cannot remember the places; one from Basle, and one, I think, from Verona. Has not that last a classical sound? I looked out for Juliet's garden, and the house of old Capulet, but could make nothing of it. There is a fine old amphitheatre there, very massive and eternal, but not graceful. We

have been at Padua too. There I could hear nothing of Dr. Bellario; and I have been twice in the Rialto without seeing either Shylock or Antonio. Such is the magic of Shakspeare. I think only of his characters passing by these places, and think them far better consecrated by his fictions than their historical realities. We go back by Mantua and Cremona to Milan, and so by the Simplon to Geneva. We parted company at Lucerne,—Mr. Wilkes going straight with the females to Geneva, and I, with Richardson and Cockburn, over St. Gothard here. We rise too early, and are sleepy for it half the day; but it is necessary, I perceive, to get through our work, &c.

Venice, at least the St. Mark part, is so like the panorama you had in Scotland last year, that it would be absurd to describe it. At any rate, however, it is very curious to find one'self in the middle of it. It looks very fairy and Eastern, splendid and melancholy. We came yesterday, and shall go away to-morrow.* I like Switzerland best. Lombardy is generally flat and dusty, and full of poplars, with the dim Alps towering through a quivering hot atmosphere. On the north the towns very magnificent and Grecian, and the large houses very picturesque, with large cool gardens inside.

In this place there is not a tree, nor a bit of any green thing but the water, which smells abominably. The whole town, however, is very picturesque; and the infinite variety of splendid palaces

* We did not.

growing out of the water, and steeping to decay, give it a character quite unique and interesting. It is a thing to remember and speak of for a lifetime.

I have not got over my home sickness yet by any means; and since I have been parted from my child, it is still stronger. She was perfectly well and gay all the time I was with her, but I cannot help being anxious about her, now that she is out of my sight, &c. God bless you, my dear child.—Very affectionately yours.

93.—*To John Allen, Esq.*

18th December 1823.

My dear Allen—Somebody told me that you had read Brodie's History of the Stuarts, and approved of it. I am very anxious that so meritorious a work of a Scottish Whig should have some honour in the Review, and mentioned it some time ago to Mackintosh, to whom I thought it would be easy to estimate the merit and originality of his views. But the said M. makes it a principle, of late, to take no notice of my letters, and I therefore apply to you, either to urge him to this laudable task, or, what would be still better, to take it on yourself. Your Saxon fit, I should think, must be pretty well over by this time; and it is really of more consequence to the cause of modern freedom to give us correct ideas of Charles than of Alfred, and to correct the blunders of Hume than of Bede. Make a stride, therefore, over eight centuries, and show us the true beginnings of the good and ill that are still at work among us, &c.

We are all well here, and tolerably quiet and harmonious,—Clerk looking the part of Judge admirably, and Cranstoun very popular as Dean.

Remember me very kindly to Lord and Lady Holland.

Write me a line in answer, and believe me, very truly yours.

94.—*To Miss Brown.*

Stuckgown, 23d September 1824.

My dear Harriet—

. . . . . .

We had a lovely day for coming here; bright, with great slow sailing autumn clouds, sometimes stooping for a while on the peaks of the hills, sometimes blackening their sides with deep shadows, or changing the skyish brilliancy of the water into dark marble. We left the horses to feed at Luss, and walked on to the point of Firkin, where I left the females to wait for the carriage, and went over the heights by the old road, &c.

This place is more beautiful than ever, and the sight of Switzerland has not spoiled it in the least. The trees have grown larger, and been more thinned. The house is all nicely painted; and here is Joseph Stewart despairing for you beside all the clear streams in the valleys. Yesterday being glorious with sun and calm, we went to the top of Ben Lomond quite leisurely and comfortably; saw all the glorious company of mountains, from Ben Nevis

to Stirling; and also our own shadows, surrounded with glories, reflected on the mist. We got down in the most magnificent sunset, and met two of the most beautiful girls in the Highlands gathering nuts in the woods; and the splendid light reflected back from their bright eyes and teeth and shining curls, as they sat on a tuft of heath, with the dark oak coppice behind them, made the loveliest and most romantic picture I ever looked on. This morning it is divinely calm and warm, though a light summer mist is still curling on the water and the heavy dew dropping from the branches. You must know that I am writing before breakfast, as the post goes off at ten o'clock. Miss M'M——, I think, is younger than when I left her. We are all well; and all your house was well when we passed. They are all a little sad at the dropping of the last of the old line, and the prospect of poor old Daldowie passing into the hands of strangers. There was something very primitive in the life we have seen and led there, and which nothing else is very likely to replace. But so the tide of time runs on, and we must submit to be borne along with it. We shall stay here for three days more, and then return to Glasgow, and so to Craigcrook. I must be in Aberdeen by the 4th of October, and after that I should be strongly tempted to run up for you, if my toils and duties would any way bear that intermission.

God bless you, my dear Harriet; I said something harsh, I believe, of your new friends in my last letter, but it had no meaning, and may be forgotten. Only

you will see no lakes like this lake, nor hills like these; and we have many more sounding rills, and singing cascades, and far more of that deep solitude and wild seclusion, which speak to the heart more impressively than shade or verdure can ever do without them.—Write to me soon again; and believe me, very affectionately yours.

95.—*To Mr. Malthus.*

6th January 1826.

My dear Malthus—I ought to have thanked you before for making us acquainted with the Eckersalls, to whom we take mightily, &c.

It is long, my good friend, since we have met in quiet and comfort; for these little glimpses during my fevered runs to London are not the thing at all. Will you not bring down Mrs. Malthus, and stay a few weeks with us next summer at Craigcrook? I have a great deal of leisure after the middle of July, and I am persuaded we could find sufficient employment for you, both at home and on our travels. I was not at all surprised to learn how severely both you and she had suffered from the great affliction which has befallen you. I never look at the rosy cheeks and slender form of my own *only* child, without an inward shudder at the thought of how much utter wretchedness is suspended over me by so slight a cord. You have still two such holds on happiness, and may they never be loosened, &c.

God bless you, my dear Malthus. I have long

been accustomed to quote you as the very best example I know of a wise and happy man. I should be sorry to be obliged to withdraw either epithet, but I would much rather part with the first than the last.—Believe me always, very affectionately yours.

96.—*To Mrs. Colden, New York.*

Craigcrook, 29th March 1827.

My dear Fanny—We have just received your letter of the 15th February, together with your father's of the 28th, and I have been so much interested and pleased with yours, that I have asked Charlotte to let me answer it; and so she has scampered out with Charley, and left me by the fire, in my invalid slippers, to talk to my invalid sister on the other side of the water. I always take a vast affection and admiration for you when you are suffering or in danger. There is something so high-minded and fair in the light way you speak of your uneasinesses and anxieties, that I think a great deal more tenderly of you and them, than if you had whined and shuddered about them—as a spoiled and petted child like you might have been expected to do; and enter warmly into the kind solicitude of the rest of your family, when I find you heroic enough to laugh at them. I earnestly trust that long before you can receive this, your gentle and cheerful magnanimity will have been rewarded by such a consummation as we all wish for, and think it most reasonable to expect. At such a distance as

this, however, it is impossible to be without anxiety; and I feel a kind of dread which checks my pen in its course of levity, and bids me close with, what never can be out of season, my earnest prayers for your safety and happiness. I like your little sketches of people too, though I do not know them; and all those stories of marriage and children which speak so plainly of a new and rapidly advancing country. Boys and girls are fathers and mothers before they are twenty. And then they go on—being fathers and mothers (as witness our dear Eliza), through toils and sickness, till their oldest children are ready to take up the manufacture—directing their whole souls, days, and resources, to carry on the population of the country. I am afraid you must have passed for a very unpatriotic matron hitherto. I daresay public considerations have had their share in making you so anxious to wipe off this reproach. Though the clan of Colden may be a little weak for a while in consequence of this tardiness, there will be a gallant colony of Wilkes, at all events, to keep up your connection. In about forty years, I reckon, there will be more than 300 cousins and second cousins of you—with none of them starving, and not much chance of any of them being hanged. Whereas, if any family had ventured to multiply in that manner in the old country, one half would certainly have been in the hospital, and a good part of the others in prison. I had another pair of fair nurses and comforters in my past illness—I mean my friend Sydney Smith's daughters, who left me about ten days ago,

after a kind and delightful visit of five weeks. The father and mother, I mean, were here too; and though so large an addition to our quiet family, with the calling and visiting it brought with it, was rather wearing now and then, it is impossible for anything to have been more agreeable than our domestic alliance. He is the gayest man, and the greatest wit in England; and yet, to those who know him, this is his least recommendation. His kind heart, sound sense, and universal indulgence, making him loved and esteemed by many to whom his wit was unintelligible, and his fancy only—(illegible).—

97.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

(Just after Canning's death).

Stuckgown, Loch Lomond, 13th August 1827.

My dear C.—Though this hermit life suits me well, yet these great and sad events have stirred me even in the depths of my solitude, and made me long a little to know how they are looked upon in the world. I have yet heard of them only from newspapers, and the scope of most of them I have seen, I confess, disgusts me, and could almost make me wish to be a hermit for life. Mine excellent host is a bit of a Tory, and takes in vile trash, so that it is not for nothing that I languish for the words of Abercrombie and Allen on this subject. It is a sad blow, and as ill-timed as possible. The Whigs have ill luck, and I fear are no favourites of Providence, any more than Cato was before them.

There is an end I fear for the present of this new and bold experiment of a liberal or rational government, for Wellington and Peel, I think, must come back, and then where can we be, but where we were before Liverpool's demise, or still further back perhaps in the blessed one of Castlereagh? I do not expect an *immediate* dismissal or resignation of the late Whig confederates; but *can* they act with those associates, coming back too in the spirit of a restoration? Can they act without Canning? and will Brougham, who scarcely submitted to be second or auxiliary even to him, consent to co-operate in such a capacity with Peel, or somebody perhaps far lower. Our best hope—for this is flat despair—is that no farther coalition should be attempted, but the ministry allowed to settle itself in an anti-catholic, legitimate, intolerant basis, and see how it can maintain itself against Ireland, and reason, and manufacturers, and common sense? God help us! These are hermit speculations, and very probably already ridiculous.

I expect to be in Glasgow on Friday or Saturday, and wish you would write me a line to say how those things are felt and judged of by the faithful. I think I am better since I came here. I ride about glorious on the exciseman's pony, and am received with much reverence as a deputy of that worthy tax-gatherer. It has been fine showery weather. The long wet has filled the lake up to its woody edge, and brought out all the voices of the tenants, and all the sweets of the limes and birches. We

have thoughts of going round by Inverary. What is Richardson doing? And our poor excellent Sir Henry is gone! These notifications make one sad in spite of reason and experience. I think I shall be at Craigcrook again about the 20th, and till then I shall not determine about going to Harrowgate, or any other health well. When is that eternal Glasgow valuation to come on after all? I shall not derange myself to be at it, after so many countermands. Where is Murray, and Thomas, and Rutherfurd, and Sophy? Send me a brief Edinburgh bulletin, or I shall come back to you like one of the sleepers awaked. With kindest love from all our party to Mrs. C. and Jeanie.—Always very affectionately yours.

98.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq. (afterwards Lord Cockburn).*

Glasgow, 19th August 1827.

My dear Cockburn—I thank you for your dispatches, which contain all I wanted to hear. The last, which I got last night, was particularly acceptable, especially for the good prospect it holds out of Lord Holland's succession to office, of which Allen surely must be able to speak with some confidence. He and Auckland are the very best, after Lansdowne, to give stability to the mixed Government, from their practical good sense, temper, and moderation—qualities, in the present crisis, of infinitely more importance than ingenuity or genius, &c.

Alas! for poor Sir Henry and ancient Hermand!* It is sad to have no more talk of times older than our own, and to be ourselves the vouchers for all traditional antiquity. I fear, too, that we shall be less characteristic of a past age than those worthies, who lived before manners had become artificial and uniform, and opinion guarded and systematic. However, we must support each other, and continue to be amiable among our juniors, if we cannot manage to be venerable.

We came round by Inverary after leaving Loch Lomond, and returned by Loch Long, slowly and voluptuously;—beautiful weather, one day sun, and the other shade, and the last the sweetest. The doctor thinks me in the way of recovery, if I can keep sober company, and avoid too much excitement, and says I need not go to Harrowgate, unless I find it necessary for these objects; so we shall hold a consult at Craigcrook, and deliberate on these things. Pray, dine there on Thursday with Mrs. C. and Jeanie, and ask Thomas and the Rutherfurds, and any others you think worthy. I hope Crieffy's daughter will not die. I wish I could summon up energy enough to write a panegyric on old Sir Henry; and if I were at home I think I should. But I can do nothing anywhere else; and I suppose Andrew Thomson† will make one in a

* Sir Harry Moncreiff, and George Fergusson, Lord Hermand, had both died on the 9th of this August.

† The Rev. Andrew Thomson.

printed sermon, after which mine would seem impertinent and impious, &c.

99.—*To Mrs. Pennington, Malshanger, Hants.*

Craigcrook, 21st October 1828.

My dear Mrs. Pennington—Alas, alas, we are not coming this year yet; and this paltry little paper is all that is still to speak to you for me. I *did* intend though, most sincerely, and wish most anxiously, to come to you; and till within these last ten days, I clung to the hope of being able to make it out; but now, at last, I must renounce it, and fancy it is necessary to let you know, &c.

We have been stationary, on the whole, all this season, and since our August pilgrimage to Loch Lomond, have not been farther than Ayr and Galloway. We have been propitiating the household and hospitable gods here, in our domestic shades, and among more shade and verdure than I ever remember at Craigcrook. We have had some pleasant strangers, and all our old pleasant friends. Cockburn has deserted us more than usual; first, for his English friends, and then for those in the north, having been a week or more with the Lauder Dicks, and passing twice by Rothiemurchus. We have had a good deal of the Murrays; his mother's very precarious health keeping them more constantly at home than usual at this season. The Rutherfurds have been staying with us, and Thomson and Fullerton are steady adherents of the city. We are

all well,—that is, always excepting my interesting *trachea*, which remains nearly as it was. Charley blooming and bright, and at least as tall as her father, which is not saying much;—living lovingly and tranquil, without envy or eclat, and growing old and insignificant in a very exemplary manner.

You see how I presume on my old privileges, and quietly take it for granted that you will be pleased to hear all this twaddle about ourselves; and so you will, I know; and will also gratify us by telling us again the *un*eventful history of your current life. We must not grow strangers to each other while we remain together on this same English earth, and I long continually to hear of one of whom I think with unabated interest every sunny morning and every moonlight night, &c.

All my house send their love to you; not only the Charlottes, but Kitty, and Fanny, and my poll parrot, and my thrush, and various other pets, on which I have been obliged to lavish my waste affection since I have lost you. Alas! alas! there is no living without these things; and so no more.—God bless you, and good night.

100.—*To Mrs. Pennington.*

Craigcrook, 8th April 1829.

My dear Mrs. Pennington—

. . . . . .

We have been here about a fortnight, something nipped with east winds, but very tranquil and con-

tented. It is an infinite relief to get away from those courts and crowds; to sink into a half slumber on one's own sofa, without fear of tinkling bells and importunate attornies; to read novels and poems by a crackling wood fire; and go leisurely to sleep without feverish anticipations of to-morrow's battles; to lounge over a long breakfast, looking out on glittering evergreens and chuckling thrushes; and dawdle about the whole day in the luxury of conscious idleness, &c.

101.—*To Charles Wilkes, Esq., New York.*

Craigcrook, 28th March 1830.

My dear Friend—I never saw three such days in March. To be sure, they are the first days of my vacation, and come after a hard winter of work and weather. But they have been so deliciously soft, so divinely calm and bright, and the grass is so green, and the pale blue sky so resonant with larks in the morning, and the loud strong bridal chuckle of blackbirds and thrushes at sunset, and the air so lovesick with sweet briar, and the garden so bright with hepaticas, and primroses, and violets, and my transplanted trees dancing out so gracefully from my broken clumps, and my leisurely evenings wearing away so tranquilly, that they have passed in a sort of enchantment, to which I scarcely remember anything exactly parallel since I first left college in the same sweet season to meditate on my first love, in my first ramble in the Highlands.

Well, it is a fine thing this spring, especially when it comes with the healing of leisure on its wings, and after a long dark season of labour, and winter, and weariness. I never have had such hard work as this last session; and though I never made so much money, I should willingly have compounded for less of both. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to make such an election—as difficult as to go gently under the influence of a strong current and brisk gale. And besides, in the first year of my official supremacy,* I thought it right to show I was equal to all the work of the first employment. My health has not suffered from the exertion; for though I have had annoyances and infirmities of diverse sorts, I am satisfied that none of them have been brought on or aggravated by my work.

We shall be here for about a fortnight only, and then we shall run up for a week or two to London, where I take the excuse of two or three appeals that have been pressed upon me to pay a visit;—my real objects being to air myself, to see some friends, to consult some doctors about my unhappy trachea and some swelling veins in my leg, and to glad my dim eyes with the sight of that lovely green, to which there is nothing to be compared in any part of the world,—the first flush of the vernal green of the southern parts of England, before the velvet of the grass is speckled with flowers and rank tufts. I take my Charlotte with me, of course, and though my retainers are far enough from being splendid,

* His Deanship.

they will pay for my journey, and the duller work I must have been doing if I had not taken it, &c.

At home things are still in a strange, and, I fear, rather precarious state, though the Duke is supposed to be rather stronger than after meeting of parliament. We are in the full career of economical and legal reform. Under the last head, there is a talk of reducing the number of our Scottish judges, and not filling up the three or four that are first vacated, —a resolution rather ominous to aspirants turned of fifty, and which would annoy me more than any one man in the profession, if I happened to care anything about it, which I do not. If I were but a little richer, I think I should decline any such appointment, and would do well so to decide. But we shall see. If I were so to decline, who knows whether I might not come over once more to see you and your wonderful country. But, in the meantime, pray come once more to see us, and perhaps we may see you home again.

With kindest love to all.—Ever affectionately yours.

102.—*To George J. Bell, Esq.*

November 1830.

My dear Bell*—I think I should not be so much delighted with your partiality, if I were not conscious of being altogether undeserving of it. I am only afraid that you find me out one day or

* Mr. Bell had just dedicated his "Principles of the Law of Scotland" to him.

other to be a much poorer creature than you imagined. However, I love and esteem you beyond any man upon earth; and if that give me any claim to your affection, I think I have a chance to retain it. I am a little ashamed and humiliated at the proofs you are giving of your superior industry and talents; but all that is painful in the feeling is very indolent and insignificant; and I look forward with pleasure, altogether unmixed with envy, to the time when your exertions shall have placed you in a situation in which your friendship for me will have something of the air of condescension.—Believe me always, your very affectionate friend.

103.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Grantham, Monday Evening,
31st January 1831.

My dear E.—Here we are on our way to you; toiling up through snow and darkness, with this shattered carcase and this reluctant and half-desponding spirit. You know how I hate early rising; and here have I been for three days up two hours before the sun, and, blinking by a dull taper, haggling at my inflamed beard before a little pimping inn looking-glass, and abstaining from suicide only from a deep sense of religion and love to my country. To-night it snows and blows, and there is good hope of our being blocked up at Witham Corner, or Alconbury Hill, or some of these lonely retreats, for a week or so, or fairly stuck in the drift

and obliged to wade our way to some such hovel as received poor Lear and his fool in some such season. Oh dear dear! But in the meantime we are sipping weak black tea by the side of a tolerable fire, and are in hopes of reaching the liberties of Westminster before dark on Wednesday. We have secured lodgings, I believe, at 37 Jermyn Street, where, if you could have the great kindness to present yourself any time after four on Thursday, you would diffuse more joy over an innocent and exiled family than they have any of them tasted since they were driven from their fatherland. This is all the purpose of my writing, and I am too sleepy, or tired at least, to say any more.

There is not much fair weather before us, I fear, politically, any more than physically; and the only comfort is, that we are honest and mean well. In that respect there has been no such ministry in England. Our other advantage, and our only one, is, that the only party that can now turn us out must be mad, or worse, to risk the experiment in the present temper of the country and state of the times. The real battle that is soon to be fought, and the only one now worth providing for, is not between Whigs and Tories, Liberals and Illiberals, and such gentlemanlike denominations, but between property and no property—swing and the law. In that battle all our Tory opponents must be on the same side with us; and as we are now in lawful command under the king, it is plain that they should range themselves under our standard, and

not make a mutiny in the camp. We did so by them when Ireland was to be snatched from the burning; and they are bound by a nearer and more fearful peril to do so by us now.

But we shall talk of these things. I am not very robustious, and have had a long weakening cold. My ladies are with me, fast asleep under a mountain of shawls. Love to Macaulay and Lady Park. I hope his history is done, and that he will soon be restored to his disconsolate friends. Remember 37 Jermyn Street.—Ever yours.

104.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

7th April 1831.

My dear C.—I was duly elected at Malton yesterday. I got there on Tuesday at one o'clock; and, attended by twelve forward disciples, instantly set forth to call on my 700 electors, and solicit the honour of their votes. In three hours and a half I actually called at 635 doors, and shook 494 men by the hand. Next day the streets were filled with bands of music, and flags, and streamers of all descriptions; in the midst of which I was helped up, about eleven o'clock, to the dorsal ridge of a tall prancing steed, decorated with orange ribbons, having my reins and stirrups held by men in the borough liveries, and a long range of flags and music moving around me. In this state I paraded through all the streets at a foot pace, stopping at every turning to receive three huzzas, and to bow to

all the women in the windows. At twelve I was safely deposited in the market-place, at the foot of a square-built scaffold, packed quite full of people; and after some dull ceremonies, was declared duly elected, by a show of hands and fervent acclamations. After which I addressed the multitude, amounting, they say, to near 5000 persons, in very eloquent and touching terms; and was then received into a magnificent high-backed chair, covered with orange silk, and gay with flags and streamers, on which I was borne on the shoulders of six electors, nodding majestically through all the streets and streetlings; and at length returned safe and glorious to my inn. At five o'clock I had to entertain about 120 of the more respectable of my constituents, and to make divers speeches till near eleven o'clock; having, in the meantime, sallied out at the head of twenty friends, to visit another party of nearly the same magnitude, who were regaling in an inferior inn, and whom we found in a state of far greater exaltation. All the Cayleys, male and female, were kind enough to come in and support me; and about eleven I contrived to get away, with Sir George and his son-in-law, and came out here with a great cavalcade about midnight. The thing is thought to have gone off brilliantly. What it has cost, I do not know; but the accounts are to be settled by Lord Milton's agent, and sent to me to London.

The place from which I write belongs to a Mr. Worsley, a man of large fortune, who has married one of Sir George Cayley's daughters, and has as-

sembled their whole genealogy in his capacious mansion. You know I always took greatly to the family, and I like them if possible better the more I see of them in their family circle. The youngest, who is about sixteen, and I have long avowed a mutual flame; and the second, who is to be married next month, is nearly a perfect beauty. But it is the sweet blood, and the naturalness and gaiety of heart which I chiefly admire in them; and after my lonely journey, and tiresome election, the delight of roaming about these vernal valleys, in the idleness of a long sunny day, in the midst of their bright smiles and happy laughs, reconciles me to existence again. It is a strange huge house, built about eighty years ago on a sort of Italian model, and full of old pictures and books, and cabinets full of gimcracks, and portfolios crammed with antique original sketches and engravings, and closets full of old plate and dusty china, which would give Thomson and you, and Johnny Clerk in his better days, work enough for a month, though I, who have only a day to spare, prefer talking with living creatures. This is all very childish and foolish, I confess, for a careful senator, at a great national crisis. But I have really been so hard worked and bothered of late, that you must excuse me if I enjoy one day of relaxation. I go off to-morrow at six o'clock, &c.

105.—*To Mrs. Laing.*

(The widow of Malcolm Laing, Esq., the Historian of Scotland.)

London, 8th July 1831.

My dear Mrs. Laing—A thousand thanks for your kind and amiable letter. It breathes the very spirit of happiness—and of all that deserves happiness; and I rejoice in it, and try not to envy it. It is very soothing to me to think of you at Craigcrook, and that you will be happy there. But you are happy everywhere, and make all places happy to which you come. Would to Heaven I were with you, among the roses and the beeches. After all, why should I not be there? I have money enough nearly to live there in independent idleness (at least with the help of your domestic economy), and the world would go on about as well, I daresay, although I passed my days in reading and gardening, and my nights in unbroken slumbers. Why, then, should I vex my worn and shattered frame with toils and efforts, and disturb the last sands in my hour-glass with the shaking of a foolish ambition? Why indeed? Why does nobody do what is most conducive to their happiness? Or, rather, why are we all framed and moulded into such artificial creatures as to require the excitement of habitual exertions, and the dream of ideal importance, and the strong exercise of hard work, to keep us out of ennui and despondency, and a stealing torpor and depressing feeling of insignificance? It is something of this

kind with all of us, and we magnify it into a notion of duty, and a pretence of being useful in our generation! I think I shall break loose one day very soon from these trammels, and live the life of nature and reason after all. It is a bad experiment, I know, at those years. But if my health stand the change, I am pretty sure that my spirits would. Only I must get through this job first. And then, I suppose, I shall discover that I must make up my losses by a year or two's hard work at the bar, and then that it will be a duty to the public to go on the bench when I begin to fall into dotage, and to my family, to expose myself and shorten my life by ridiculous exertions.

There is a sermon for you! Heaven knows what has led me into it; for I only meant to thank you, and to say that you may do what you like with my picture (and the original!), &c.

106.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

London, 23d August 1831.

H. of C., five o'clock.—We expect a breeze to-night about that damned Dublin election, and I am rather anxious to see in what tone we take up the apology. In the meantime you see the anti-reformers have made the election sure.

Lovely weather still, and warm showers. I ran out of the House for two hours last night to Vauxhall, and saw the balloon soar up from a cloud of red light glowing all over the car and glittering

expanse below, into the pure tranquillity of the sweetest moonlight, which came chequering in among the trees beyond. It was, beyond comparison, beautiful. All my household have gone to walk in the garden; while I am about to enter into that hold of a slave-ship, and with little hope even of getting to the reform committee to-night, at least till very late.

I shall send you my new clause to-morrow, &c.

107.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

London, Sunday Evening,
9th October 1831.

My dear C.—You will have heard of this fatal division.* *We will not resign;* and this is almost all the comfort I can give you, &c. In the meantime, the country must do its duty; first, and chiefly, by being quiet and orderly; and next, by expressing its adherence to the bill and the ministry in all firm and lawful ways. Althorpe is rather anxious that those indications should be reserved till we are near meeting again; but most people think it better not to repress them now, when the feeling is most ardent. In fact, the tone will be given, whether we choose it or not, by London, and the great towns in the heart of England. And this should, and must be followed. Only be quiet. The chief hope of the enemy is that you will not. Then several bishops will die (or be killed), or converted; and several

* In the Lords, throwing out the Reform Bill.

lay lords also. Then, when we meet, probably in January, we shall bring in the bill again, with some improvements in mechanism, and a few obnoxious things corrected,—such, most probably, as the division of counties,—and then passing more quietly through the Commons, we shall offer it again to the Lords, who, it is surmised, will not dare again to reject. But having satisfied their honour by the victory and delay, will find out that the state of the country is not what they imagined,—that all they meant was to give time for deliberate consideration, and that it is not by any means so bad as it was before; and, in short, that though they still hate and fear it, they must submit to a necessary evil, and accept it, under protest, for honour of the drawers, &c.

108.—*To Miss Cockburn.*

(Dictated to Mrs. Jeffrey.)

London, 17th October 1831.

My dear Jane—I cannot write to you with my own hand, having been gashed with doctors' knives but three hours ago; but it is a pleasure to tell you that I am alive, and in good hope of soon getting better. I was very much gratified with your kind letter, and particularly with your reliance upon my kindness and affection. I am naturally very constant in love; and having taken a passion for you, when you were little more than a baby, I assure you I shall not change, although you should turn out even a greater woman than you are. I could say a

great deal more on this subject, were it not letting Charley, who is already beginning to blush, too much into our confidence; but I hope the time will soon come, when I may open my heart to you without the interference of any other person. Tell your papa that I have communicated with Lord Melbourne about Heath, and that he is *not* to be respited. Tell him, also, that we shall not be prorogued till Thursday, and probably shall not meet again till the first week in December, which is too short a holiday for one in my condition to think of going to Scotland. I am anxious to hear of the public meeting, and hope somebody has sent me a newspaper with a good account of it.

I have a charming, kind, cheerful letter from your mother, containing such pleasing accounts of the restoration of sick children to health, that the very reading of it should go far to recover a young sufferer like me; and indeed there is something quite balsamic in the air of innocent enjoyment and domestic affection that breathes all over it.

God bless you, my dear Jane; and may you be long well and happy, after we lovers of an older race have ceased to be anything but objects of kind remembrance. You have got through the usual portion of illness and suffering in very early life, and, I hope, cleared off all scores of that sort for the rest of your existence. The sweetness and fortitude with which you have borne it must have formed you to many valuable habits, and have certainly endeared you to those who loved you before. I wish to God

I might expect the same good fruits from my maturer chastisements! Farewell, my dear Jane.—Ever very affectionately yours.

109.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq. (afterwards Lord Cockburn).*

London, 18th December 1831.

My dear C.—We made a grand division last night, or rather this morning,—324 out of a house of 486,—exactly two to one. The debate, on the whole, was not interesting. ——— made a most impertinent, unfair, and petulant speech, but with passages of great cleverness. Macaulay made, I think, the best he has yet delivered;—the most condensed, at least, and with the greatest weight of matter. It contained the only *argument*, indeed, to which any of the speakers who followed him applied themselves. There was a very running fire of small calibres all the early part of yesterday; but there were, in the end, three remarkable speeches. First, a mild, clear authoritative vindication of the *measure* upon broad grounds, and in answer to general imputations, by Lord J. Russell, delivered with a louder voice and more decided manner than usual with him. Next, a magnificent, spirited, and most eloquent speech by Stanley, chiefly in castigation of ———, whom he trampled in the dirt, but containing, also, a beautiful and spirited vindication of the whole principle and object of reform. This was by far the best speech I have heard from S., and, I fancy, much the best he has ever made. It

was the best, too, I must own, in the debate; for though Macaulay's was more logical and full of thought, this was more easy, spirited, and graceful. The last was Peel's, which, though remarkable, was not good, &c.

110.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq. (afterwards Lord Cockburn).*

London, 12th February 1832.

. . . . . .

I dined yesterday at Lord Carlisle's, and to-day at Lord Althorpe's. The first had ladies, and, consequently, was the most gay and agreeable,—to say nothing of having Sydney Smith and Luttrell. But Lady Morley was my great charm; out of all sight the wittiest and most original woman in London, and yet not at all a *kill-joy*, but an encourager of all other inferior gaieties, and with not the least mixture of spite or uncharity in her pleasantry. She is rather stricken in years, so there is no disturbance of my judgment upon her on that score. We had also all the Lady Blanches and Lady Georginas of the family, who, with their mother, have the true, sweet-blooded simplicity of the old English aristocracy; to which, I grieve to say, we have nothing parallel, and not much in the same rank that is not in harsh contrast, in Scotland.

To-day's party was small, but it grew very delightful in the end, when it was still smaller, and had dwindled down to Lord Nugent, Poulett Thompson, Cam Hobhouse, and myself. Althorpe, with

his usual frankness, gave us a pretended confession of faith and a sort of creed of his political morality, and avowed that, though it was a very shocking doctrine to promulgate, he must say that he had never sacrificed his own inclinations to a sense of duty without repenting it, and always found himself more substantially unhappy for having exerted himself for the public good! We all combated this atrocious heresy the best way we could; but he maintained it with an air of sincerity, and a half earnest half humorous face, and a dexterity of statement, that was quite striking. I wish you could have seen his beaming eye and benevolent lips kindling as he answered us, and dealt out his natural familiar repartees with the fearlessness as if of perfect sincerity, and the artlessness of one who sought no applause, and despised all risk of misconstruction; and the thought that this was the leader of the English House of Commons,—no speculator, or discourser, or adventurer,—but a man of sense and business, of the highest rank, and the largest experience both of affairs and society. We had also a great deal of talk about Nelson, and Collingwood, and other great commanders, whom he knew in his youth, and during his father's connection with the navy; and all of whom he characterised with a force and simplicity which was quite original and striking. I would have given a great deal to have had a Boswell to take a note of the table talk; but it is gone already.

111.—*To Miss Cockburn.*

13 Clarges Street, Wednesday Night,
21st March 1832.

My dear Jane—I am sorry to hear that you have again been suffering, although it is with *great pride* that I learn that you bear the restraints and inconveniences of your situation with your usual cheerful magnanimity. I assure you I have not forgotten your kind sympathy with me in my painful experiences of last autumn, nor the sweet consolation it afforded me in a period of great gloom and depression. I wish I could make any adequate return to you now. But you know the affection I have always had, and always shall have, for you, sick or well, married or unmarried, young or old. I wish I had anything very lively to tell you. But my life of late has been very nearly as uniform, and I fancy still more irksome than yours. Getting up (with difficulty) at a little before ten, I usually found ten or fifteen letters to read; and before I had got half through them, was obliged to run down to a committee, where I was shut up till after four, when the House met, and seldom got finally home till after two o'clock in the morning. One-half of the time I managed to pair off from seven till nine, when I got some dinner, and lay flat on the sofa for an hour after it. But this could only be done when there was no urgent or ticklish business; and when it could not, I was obliged to gobble down one tough chop, and a wine glass full of water; as meagre a

meal in short as I have seen waiting by the side of your couch, when you had reasons of a different kind for your regime. Charley and her mother have the comfort of a more leisurely existence, and seem to spend their time very tolerably, in driving about, and walking in the parks, and visiting, and going to flower gardens, and shops, and exhibitions. They are both very well, and have just about as many peeps at the splendour and vanity of a gay London life, as to excite their imaginations, without corrupting their tastes, or wearying them out. They know a good many people now, and might know a great number more, if they would take the trouble. But they are indolent, I think, in this sort of cultivation, and reserve all their intimacy and affection for their old cherished and tried friends in Scotland—for which I cannot much blame them.

I cannot tell you what longing looks I turn to my own dear home; nor with what sinkings of heart I contemplate the chances and obstacles that still stand in the way of our return. I trust, however, that we shall get back about midsummer, or at all events in July; and that you and I may sit by the bath at Bonaly, and under the shade at Craigcrook, before the sweets of another autumn pass away. The weather here has been more backward than with you, though within these few days, it has mellowed into spring feeling. There are young lambs skipping in the parks, where the grass is as green as emeralds, and though there are but few buds on the old forest trees, all the shrubs are alive, and the almonds be-

gin to shew their red blossoms in the gardens. You will be sorry to hear that poor old Fergus* is so ill that I fear he will die very soon. I have made great efforts to get him shipped off to Scotland, where he wishes much to go; but the quarantine regulations are so absurdly severe, that in spite of all my influence at the privy council, I have not been able to get a passage for him, and he is quite unable to travel by land. He has a brother here in town, and our Scotch maidens are all very kind to him. He has decided water in the chest, and swelling in all his limbs. The doctors say he may die any day, and that it is scarcely possible he can recover.

Tell your father (that will give you consequence in his eyes) that our Scotch Reform Bill will not be brought on for ten days or a fortnight after the English one is passed, and probably not till after it passes the second reading in the Lords; and that I do not want any advice about the number of members generally, or of county members to be allowed to Scotland, but that I shall be thankful for his opinion on the other points I mentioned to him in my letter of yesterday.

We have been dining, in a Scotch family way, with Richardson at Hampstead to-day; and keeping the fast and humiliation over an excellent dinner, and in a good flow of gay and hopeful talk—which I think the most laudable celebration.

Cholera is far worse here than at Edinburgh, but it excites very little sensation, and scarcely any

* His servant. This was during the cholera alarm.

alarm. Among the better classes, at all events, its ravages are not at all formidable, and there seems to be a general expectation that they will never be very formidable.

If you do not get well soon, my dear Jane, tell your father (and your mother too) that we all think you ought to be brought up here, for the benefit of *London* advice—which, with all our nationality, it is impossible to doubt, must be, and is, better than any that can be had elsewhere, both from the great profits attracting all the very clever men, and from the far greater range of practice and experience that is here open to them. If they will trust you with us, we could rig you out with a nice little couch in Charley's room, and answer for kind and judicious care of you. It would be an infinite delight to us all to see you blooming out into your natural health, under our eyes and hands.

God bless and keep you always, my kind, pure-hearted child.—Ever very affectionately.

Write me a line when it is quite convenient, if it be not irksome or troublesome to you, but not otherwise.

112.—*To Mrs. Rutherfurd, Edinburgh.*

London, 13 Clarges Street,
1st April 1832.

You must not scold, but pity me, my dear Sophia. You do not believe that I am in any danger of for-

getting you, or (though I do not write often to you) that I am indifferent about being remembered. You know better things, and are yourself of better principles, than to nourish such unworthy suspicions. You know how I am hurried and worried, and how little time I have to do anything I like. And then I have *occasion* to write to Cockburn almost every day, and naturally take occasion to pour out all my gossip to him, of which I take it for granted that he retails as much as there is any demand for in your market. I do not believe, indeed, that the details of an insignificant existence were ever so fully recorded. If they had only been addressed to *you*, they might have come nearer the standard of Swift's Journal to Stella. But being noted down for the satisfaction of a matter-of-fact male creature, I am afraid they will read rather like the *précis* of a daily paper; though, after all, it is the want of any good contemporary daily paper that makes Swift's Journal so interesting.

I will not fatigue you with politics,—the said daily papers will give you enough of that; and there is not much, I fear, in my private life which it would amuse you to hear of. If I had no home, and no dear friends at that distant home, I should like London very well. Being naturally social, and having outlived all pretensions, I am amused with its variety, and quite out of the reach of its mortifications. I find a great number of people who are very pleasing, and very kind to me; and the very circumstance that it is not my home they inhabit,

reconciles me to their constant disappearance in the rapid whirl of that society. Its enormous extent, and the rapidity of its movement, make it difficult to conceive how it can ever be a home to anybody. Even if a small circle attempt to join hands and keep together in its eddies, they are soon drifted asunder, and reduced to hail each other from the breakers as they rush past in their opposite courses. The only chance is for *one pair* to cling close, like waltzers, and whirl *lovingly* among the whirlers. But this will scarcely answer for a lifetime.

I have not lately seen any new people, and have been mostly with the Hollands and my neighbours, the Miss Berrys, where I have the advantage of seeing most of the *Tory* leaders. I dined there the other day with ————, who passes for the most classical beauty of the day, and who is a very good Sultana, plump, Grecian, and imperious—finely cast features, but of a broad and massive stamp, large dark eyes, and wavy braids of dusky shining hair. I did not sit near her, and was obliged to go away early, &c.

We went out yesterday to dine with Emily Hibbert, at Richmond, where I saw the celebrated beauty of the North Riding of Yorkshire, of whom I heard a great deal when I was down at my election at Malton last year. She is a ————; very fair, tall, graceful, and prettily stupid, with gracious manners and a very sweet voice; and yet I did not think her charming. Then she is a little prosy in her *talk*; and though she has been a great deal abroad, and is

of very ancient blood, certainly has not a very distinguished air. But what do you care about her? or I either, for that matter. We called on your friend Nancy Elphinstone, who was as natural, emphatic, and fond of you as ever. We have promised to go and dine with her the very first day that is vacant, &c.

113.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

Hastings, 25th April 1832.

My dear C.—I have been out of London for six days, and have thought nothing of politics or business since I turned my back on it, till your letter of the 20th was brought to me this morning, and I do not mean to think or say anything of the kind yet. God forbid! We came to Seven Oaks on Friday, and walked all over the magnificent domains of Knowle next morning,—a house begun in King John's time, and finished in Elizabeth's, and with finishing and furnishing very entire of both eras. In the evening we came to Tunbridge Wells, where we staid till yesterday, in the loveliest weather, and came down here yesterday, in something of a fog; and here we are in a new hotel, so close to the sea that you may spit into it from the windows, which is a great convenience, and with boats and sloops sleeping about in the bay, or hauled up on the pebbles, for they have no quay or harbour of any sort, but merely pull up pretty large vessels with a windlass and leave them, heaving and scattered

about like wrecked things in a most wild and disorderly manner. People live, too, all night in these grounded hulks, and the lights in them after dark have a curious effect from our windows. This is a very curious and picturesque town, partly very old, and partly very new. The coast is chiefly, like Dover, a range of bare perpendicular sandstone rock, at least 200 feet high, generally quite close to the beach, with occasional narrow green ravines between. Into one of the largest of these the old town is packed, and spreads its wings of tall narrow houses along part of the cliffs on both sides, with only a little esplanade between them and the surf, and with their backs within 50 feet of the bare overtopping rock behind. The new buildings are a little way off, where the cliffs recede, and room has been made in many places by cutting them back. Very gay showy places they are—almost as fine as the Regent's Park Terraces in London, and stuck up on terraces, too, in some places. The buildings stretch near half a mile, and were begun within these seven years. There are bits of a good old Norman castle on the cliff, and magnificent downs, marked with Roman and British camps, along the heights, with the greenest grass, and the whitest sheep to eat it, that you ever set eyes on; add a long row of martello towers looking massive and black along the white sands towards Beachyhead, and you have an exact landscape of the channel. We return to Tunbridge to-morrow, and to London on Friday, though only to pass into Hertfordshire

for a few more days' idleness. I have been walking and climbing all day, and yet feel more dyspeptical than when I was in the Dorset committee all day, and in the Honourable House all night.

Every body, I hear, is out of town, and yet I gather that the Tories are exulting, and that our premature exultation has subsided.

114.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

London, 2d August 1832.

My dear C.—Men are to grow profligate and irregular when the world is drawing to a close, and so I find it is with me. These dregs of the session go against one's stomach, and I try oftener than usual to make them pass from me. I have been dining out, and risking countings out, by not coming back till late; and to-day I am tempted to run as far as Ham with Burdett and George Sinclair, in spite of an ominously thin house, and the tail of the Irish tithes in perspective. I hope all blunders about schoolmasters, and clerks, and half-crowns, are now settled, and that the machinery is fairly at work, grinding claimants into voters with due facility and dispatch, &c.

For Heaven's sake, let no friend of mine *pay*, or *lend* for an hour, any part of the half-crown to claimants on my interest. Nothing can be liker bribery, and *I* wish not to approach within measureless distances of that honour, &c.

115.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq. (afterwards Lord Cockburn)*

London, 8th August 1832.

. . . . . .

For my comfort, there are still more flaws and awkwardnesses in the English act; to correct one of which, a very awkward attempt was made last night, but quite unsuccessfully. The torpor and apathy of voters to register, or to make the qualifying payments of votes and taxes, is altogether astounding and disgusting, and Heaven knows what the result will be. Here in London I do not believe *one-fourth* of those substantially qualified will be found to have come forward, and in the counties, I believe, there will be nearly a half who have hung back out of mere laziness. This makes me a little anxious about Edinburgh after all. If Blair has been vigilant in getting 2000 registered, may he not run one of us hard? I delight in Abercrombie's manly good sense and success, but I must lose no time in coming to look after my interest, or he will steal all the second votes I had reckoned on from the Tories and Radicals. I lament the procession,* but of course cannot repudiate. What am I to do with my females?

* An election procession into Edinburgh which his constituents had arranged, but which he contrived to escape.

116.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Craigcrook, 26th August 1832.

My dear E.—I hope you take it as a sure sign of my wretchedness that I do not write to you. Not exactly wretchedness at being away from you, or suffering from this Pontic exile, but wretchedness from having still less leisure to do any thing I like to do than when I had glimpses of you in London. I have had such heaps of letters to answer, such crowds of committee men to thank and visit, so many friends to dine with, and for the last four days, such meetings and speechifyings to electors, that I sometimes begin to wish for the leisure of Clarges Street and Westminster, where I had at least the protection of insignificance and obscurity. I have had one great meeting, and seven moderate ones, and I am to have fifteen more, that is, meetings of the electors in each ward of the city. They are generally held in churches, and terminate, with great propriety, in a catechism. I delivered three discourses yesterday with good approbation, and was thought very skilful in my responses. I refused to *pledge* myself, except to principles, and am very handsomely supported. We have near 7,000 claims entered, of which 6000 are good, and of those they say near 4000 will be for Abercrombie, and near 5,000 for me. This at least is the estimate of my committees, and, though probably a little sanguine, I do not think it can be very far wrong. I shall

scarcely get through my fifteen meetings till late in next week, when I shall fly, I think, from this tiresome work, to my Naiades and Oreades at Loch Lomond, whom it is a great pity that I ever quitted.

In the meantime, and *áttendant mieux*, I am agreeably disappointed in this here Craigcrook. It is much less rough, and rugged, and nettley, and thistley, than I expected, and really has an air that I should not be ashamed to expose to the gentler part of polished friends from the south. It has rained a little every day, but nothing to signify, and there is a crystal clearness over the steep shores of the Frith, and a blue skyishness on the distant mountains of the west, that almost makes amends for your emerald lawns and glorious woods of Richmond and Roehampton. Well, and so good night. I have been walking in my garden and offering my quiet little heathen homage to that serene Jupiter, to whom a truly devout spirit cannot help paying a small tribute of devotion on such a Sunday night. I cannot send this till to-morrow, so you lose nothing by my going to bed.

Tuesday morning, 28th.—I had not time for a word yesterday; having again to perform service in three chapels, two in the morning, and one, to my especial annoyance, at seven o'clock in the evening, when all christian people should be at dinner; and now I am going to a church meeting, and so good bye.

Five o'clock.—I preached near two hours, and very few people were asleep, and I have five meetings for to-morrow, all in holy places. How is it possible that I should write gossip to you, or even to any woman alive.

Tell me about your own little ——— En Espagne —that shadowy, mystical vision that hovered like a meteor over your head, and filled it with dreams of reform. Tell me too of Macaulay's coarse reality of Leeds, and that Sadler is not likely to defeat him by his counterfeit and dishonest ultra-radical story. And then, gossip though it be, tell me of that "bright vision of the guarded mount," who "looks towards Nomancos and Bayona's hold," &c. Tell me, moreover, of the Spring Rices, and in which of the three kingdoms they are at this present writing, and whether they are intending, and ever incline their hearts hitherwards. Moreover, of Malthus, and Malthusia junior and senior, what tidings? and of that great city which was London, and the desolations thereof; and Tommy Moore, and whether he is to be of Limerick; and Samuel Rogers, and whether he is yet of this world.

And so take pity on me, and comfort me with soft words.

We are all well, did I tell you that? and that the Charlottes are enjoying their leisure and idleness with a most malicious intenseness, from its contrast with my great labours, which are not in the Lord, though mostly in his houses. And so *quid plura?* I am chilly, with congealing sweat, and am about to

ride forth in a wet east wind, which may end in cholera; but anything would be a relief. God bless you.—Ever yours.

117.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

London, 11th April 1833.

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You think me a very desponding politician; and perhaps I am. But I am far nearer right than the sanguine, if there are still any such. I venture therefore, to say again, that I think the Government and the country are in the greatest possible hazard; that there is great ground to think that the Lords will *not* pass our Irish Church Bill in such a state as that the ministers can own it; and then we are pledged, and without pledge necessitated, to resign; though what is to come after us, but almost instant anarchy, no man can conjecture.

Independently of this, the pressure of the movement upon currency, taxes, English Church reform, and lots of other things, is daily drawing off the dregs of our popularity out of doors, and sending men off in the House in piques and pets to the right hand and to the left.

The result of this Gloucester election shows that there is a setting of the tide in wealthy places back to Toryism; and though nothing can be so absurd and malignant as what a newspaper has been writing against us for the last few days, it is no doubt quite true that our hold on the people is growing less and

less. The absurdity is in supposing that it depends on the *will of the ministry* whether the things they want done shall be or not. They abuse us for not making an instant radical reform, both of English and Irish Church, &c.; and yet it will soon be seen, I take it, that we *cannot* carry even a slight endowment of the latter, and the obstacle to our carrying that, and fifty other things, is nothing less than *the existence of the King and the House of Lords.*

What intense asses our provincial censors, and thorough, simple, sweeping, reformers, are! God bless you.

118.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

London, 16th July 1833.

My dear C.—Not much more to tell you, &c. I breakfasted to-day at Rogers' with Macaulay and S. Smith; both in great force and undaunted spirits. Mac. is a marvellous person. He made the very best speech that has been made this session on India, a few nights ago, to a House of less than fifty. The Speaker, who is a severe judge, says he rather thinks it the best speech he ever heard. Our attendance was growing thinner; but this crisis has brought back many, and I have no doubt we shall have 450 in the House on Thursday, without a call. The weather is very hot and beautiful now. I wish I were lolling on one of my high shady seats at Craigcrook, listening to the soothing wind among the branches! And yet it is shocking to think how much all that scene is disenchanted by its vicinity

to my constituents. The fleshly presence of Mr. ——, Mr. ——, and Mr. ——, by whom I am baited daily, helps, I doubt not, to enliven that impression. Murray gave dinner to the deputation yesterday, but ingeniously contrived not to come among them, but left them to be entertained by William and Mary. I fortunately am known to inhabit a house in which there are only ten spoons, and as many plates, and to give no dinners. I see no reason in the world why they should not settle their affairs with the provost and the creditors; and yet, I now think that they will *not* settle. The other party is far the most reasonable, &c.

119.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

Stanmore, 30th July 1833.

My dear C.

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We came here yesterday; a most lovely evening; and I felt as I walked on the airy common, under the brilliant moon, and the orange glow of twilight, as if I should soon be well again. But I had but a feverish night, and have been full of qualms and sickings most part of to-day. However, we drove over to Harrow, and saw an exhilarating spectacle of the scholastic youth mustering, like swarming bees, for the holiday up-breaking. The aristocratical air of it put my humble Scottish recollections rather to the blush. There were sixty or seventy carriages, half of them with coronets, and prancing

horses, and consequential grooms, and Heaven knows what besides. But the gentle bearing of the boys themselves, the affectionate leave-takings, the kind words to the old dames, the respectful deference to the smiling simpering masters, were all as much above our ruder state, in a moral point of view, as the other were in a worldly. And then the galloping of gigs, and the shouting from crowded barouches, as they swept, with their light-hearted cargoes, through the shady lawns, was beautiful to see and to hear. It was great luck to have fallen on such a spectacle in an accidental drive, &c.

120.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq. (afterwards Lord Cockburn).*

London, Friday Night,
23d August 1833.

My dear C.—Our bills were accepted in the Commons this afternoon, with the Lords' amendments, such as they be, on their heads, and now only wait the royal assent to be law. And so there is one job done, and an end to self-election in Scotch burghs! and a beginning to something else, which may be better or worse as it pleases God. And so I may go and divert myself, I hope, for a week or two; and if I can get my bills paid, and my trashy papers packed up, I shall be off before two o'clock, and sleep at Malshanger to-morrow. I shall stay there till Sunday, and then proceed to see a god-daughter I have near Bath; and I think it would be a comfort, if you would write, on receipt of this,

a few lines to the post-office there, where I shall be till after Wednesday. I then cross the heart of England into Yorkshire, where I mean to visit Morehead, and probably the Cayleys, and may finish my wanderings by crossing over to Brougham, and looking in on the Marshalls at Ulleswater, and Mrs. Fletcher, and Wordsworth, at Grasmere and Rydale. But this picturesque part of my plan is the most problematical. If it is left out, I have promised to cross from Newcastle, and see Richardson near Jedburgh. Why should you not come and join us there? where we might have a quieter and more tranquil discussion on the sum of things than in the too jovial re-unions of Edinburgh. But I shall write about this again when I know more of my own mind and body.

The House will adjourn to-morrow, till Wednesday, and the prorogation will not be later than Thursday. We dispatched all our work to-day before three o'clock, and then I left farewell cards at the ministers, and made a few idle calls on ladies, and went, at six o'clock, to a quiet dinner at the Hollands, with Rogers, Lord J. Russell, and Miss Fox, and so finished my London campaign with a *bonne bouche* of a very mild and agreeable flavour. Empson has been sitting with us since, and altogether, I do not part from those things without a certain sadness. I shall go to bed, and tell you more in the morning.

Saturday Morning, 24*th*.—We are just setting forth, and I hear no more news, or indeed, anything but

the tinkling of departing sovereigns, and trampling of obsequious creditors. It is rather a gloomy day, but mild and calm, &c.

And so, in good earnest, ends our official correspondence, which has not, I suspect, had a true official character.

121.—*To H. Cockburn, Esq.* (*afterwards Lord Cockburn*).

Malshanger, 26th August 1833.

My dear C.—The load of London and Parliament is at last lifted from my life, and I have had two days of natural existence. We got here about dark on Saturday. I drank too much coffee, and slept ill; lounged about with Jane* all yesterday, hallowing our Sabbath day with quietness; and to-day I have driven in an open carriage, and ridden upon a pony like any rustic squire, for near five hours together; and have been to see *Silchester*, the largest and loftiest Roman work above ground in Great Britain. There is a wall of more than a mile in length, and varying from twenty to seven or eight feet in height, all overhung with trees and ivy, and rough with masses of flint and strange lumps of rude stone. It enclosed either a Roman town or a great castrum stativum; and there is a small amphitheatre in one corner, with the arena still quite flat, but the sloping sides completely grown up with mud. The whole stands upon a high lonely part of the country, with only a rude low church and a single

* Mrs. Pennington.

farm-house in the neighbourhood, but commanding a most lovely, and almost boundless, view over woody plains and blue skyey ridges on all sides of it. It is about the most striking thing I ever saw; and the effect of that grand stretch of shaded wall, with all its antique roughness and overhanging wood, lighted by a low autumnal sun, and the sheep and cattle feeding in the green solitude at its feet, made a picture not soon to be forgotten, &c.

122.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Killin, 2d August 1834.

My dear E.—This *is* a great disappointment, and, after all, *why* were you so faint-hearted after coming so far? Rain! Oh effeminate cockney, and most credulous brother of a most *unwise* prognosticator of meteoric changes. Though it rained in the Bœotia of Yorkshire, must it rain also in the Attica of Argyll? Why, there has not been a drop of rain in the principality of Macallummore for these ten days; but, on the contrary, such azure skies, and calm cœrulean waters, such love and laziness-inspiring heats by day, and such starlight rowings and walkings through fragrant live blossoms, and dewy birch woods by night; and then such glow-worms twinkling from tufts of heath and juniper, such naiads sporting on the white quartz pebbles, and meeting your plunges into every noon-day pool; and such herrings at breakfast, and haggises at dinner, and such pale pea-green mountains, and a genuine *Highland*

sacrament! The long sermon in Gaelic, preached *out of tents* to picturesque multitudes in the open air, grouped on rocks by the glittering sea, in one of the mountain bays of those long withdrawing lochs! You have no idea what you have missed; and for weather especially, there is no memory of so long a tract of calm, dry, hot weather at this season; and the fragrance of the mountain hay, and the continual tinkling of the bright waters! But you are not worthy even of *the ideas* of these things, and you shall have no more of them, but go unimproved to your den at Hayleybury, or your stye at the Temple, and feed upon the vapour of your dungeon.

When we found you had really gone back from your vow, we packed up for Loch Lomond yesterday, and came on here, where we shall stay in the good Breadalbane country till Monday, and then return for a farewell peep at our naiads, on our way to Ayrshire, and thence back to Craigcrook about the 18th. (Write always to Edinburgh.) I sent a letter to Napier for you, which he returned two days ago. After that I could not tell where to address you. I left instructions at the Arrochar post-office for the forwarding of your letters to Rice. Only two newspapers had come for you when we came away, and these I generously bestowed on my host. And now it is so hot that I cannot write any more, but must go and cool myself in the grottos of the rocky Dochart, or float under the deep shades that overarch the calm course of the translucent Lochy, or sit on the airy summit where the ruins of Finlarig catch the faint

fluttering of the summer breeze. All Greek and Hebrew to you, only more melodious—Poor wretch!

We have been at Finlarig and at Auchmore; both very beautiful, but the heat spoils all, as I fear it may have our salmon. God bless us, I am dyspeptic and lumbaginous, and cannot sleep, and I lay it all on the heat, when I daresay old age and bad regime should have their share, &c.

Why should not you and Malthus come down to our solemnity on the 8th September? After your long services, a fortnight's holiday could not be grudged, especially for the purpose of making you better teachers, and getting solutions to all your difficulties. I hope Mrs. Sommerville will come. I had a glimpse of my beautiful Mrs. Grant before leaving Edinburgh, and grudge such a sultana to India. Write to me soon. My Charlottes send their love in anger to you.—Ever yours.

123.—*To Mrs. Pennington.*

Edinburgh, 26th December 1834.

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If I had no other motive to do my duty in a superior way, I think *that* would be sufficient, and I am half angry with you for looking back upon sentiments which I would do anything to justify, and cannot but wish you should cherish as pieces of youthful folly, to be laughed at and renounced in maturer years. O no, my dear child, do not repress any generous enthusiasm which will remain; and

believe that the best part, not only of happiness but of wisdom, must be built upon that foundation.

I have certainly had rather hard work, but I do not find it irksome. Even the early rising, which I dreaded the most, proves very bearable. Certainly in the whole of my past life, I never saw so many sunrises as since the beginning of November; and they have been inexpressibly beautiful. We have holiday now, however, for a week or two, and I sleep over the glorious dawning, and have leisure to dream a little, and to read my beloved poets, and to write to those I love.

We are all tolerably well, and very contented, and social, and happy (if one may use so bad a word). You know we have not much spite or envy among us, and have a disposition to be kind, which scarcely ever fails to make life soft and easy; and then that old undestructible love of nature, and sympathy with sunsets and moonshine, which is so far from depending on youthful enthusiasm, that it grows with years, and brightens when everything wears dim. We shall see you in spring—see you all. I think we shall be up early in April, &c.

124.—*To Mrs. D. Colden.*

Malshanger (Hants), 29th April 1835.

My dear Fanny—We have been five weeks in London, and are now with an old friend, one stage on our way home to Edinburgh; and Charlotte being lazy and I (for once) in a state of undeniable

idleness, it comes to me to make out our monthly despatch. Our last from your side is from Dr. George (of 16th March), written on his return from Charleston, which interested and amused us very much. I am glad to find his general patriotism does not extend to the patronage of slavery, and that he likes the cold and comforts of New York better than the languid and imperfect luxuries of the south. The great use (and apology) of all patriotism is to make us pleased with our actual lot, and anxious really to improve and exalt it. The evil is, it makes us abusive and unjust now and then, because we are *envious*, to others. We are all growing better, I hope, and consequently more alike, and more indulgent. For my part, I am a reasonable cosmopolite, and am delighted to hear of the happiness of all in America, especially of one family, to whom I owe more than any other. It is a great gratification to me to see the unbroken and entire cordiality in which all its members continue to live, and no small pride to think that I belong in some measure to the party. God bless you.

London has answered very well. Our old friends have been very kind to us, and I go away confirmed in my purpose of spending a little time there every spring. Being there, for the first time, without any serious task or occupation, I entered more largely into society than it was easy for me to do before; and, at all events, crowded into these five weeks the sociality of a whole long session of Parliament. I had the good luck, too, to come at a very stirring

time, and to witness the restoration to power of the party to which I was attached as long as it was lawful for me to belong to a party. From the height of my judicial serenity, I now affect to look down on those factious doings, but cannot, I fear, get rid of old predilections. At any rate, I am permitted to maintain old friendships, and to speak with the openness of ancient familiarities, with those I most love to meet in private. As you know but few of those we chiefly lived with, it would be of no use to give you a list of names, though it would include almost all who are much worth seeing in England. Yet we go back quite contented to our provincial duties and enjoyments. For the Charlottes, I should use a stronger word; for I think they were rather surfeited with the stir and brilliancy of London. My more active and youthful nature stood the excitement better. We missed dear Malthus much in this busy scene, &c.

I am going to make an addition to Craigcrook, and am pulling down so much of the house that I fear we shall not be able to inhabit there this year, so that we shall either go again on our travels, or try to find a house for three months in some wild corner of the West Highlands, and live a solitary, philosophical, and savage life there, through the autumn. Just on leaving the *tourbillons* of London this scheme seems to have great attraction. But it may not be quite easy to put in practice, &c. God bless you both.—Ever affectionately yours.

125.—*To Lord Cockburn.*

Skelmorlie, 28th August 1835.

My dear C.—A thousand thanks for your letter. When I say that parties are nearly as equally balanced out of Parliament as in it, I mean, of course, that I believe people would go, on an appeal to force, or any other *decisive* test of adhesion, pretty much in that proportion; not certainly from pure independent individual liking or judgment, but under the probable (or certain) operation of the ordinary influences of wealth, fear, hate, interest, or old habit or prejudice, which will only gain strength instead of being dissipated by such a crisis. In Scotland, where there is more intellectual activity and far more conceit of individual wisdom, the proportion, I am satisfied, is different. But, from the best reports I can get, I believe a decided majority of the peasantry in England would adhere to the Conservatives—not, certainly, from any conviction of the justice of the cause, or any opinion (which they are utterly incompetent to form) of their own on the general interest, but from habit and prejudice, which are much better elements for enthusiasm and noble daring than the cooler suggestions of reason or love of right. Then, if you consider that the most efficient and only terrible part of the reforming body is known (by friends and foes) to be hostile to monarchy, church, and peerage, and no very safe advocates for property (at least large property), law, or the arts, it is difficult to suppose, that if the alter-

native actually occurs, whether to give *them* an irresistible preponderance, or to seek shelter under a Conservative banner, with the certainty of their* granting more than half of all the reforms which the wiser part of their present opponents require, a very large body of these opponents should not go over to them, and carry with them a proportional part of their own followers and numerical adherents. But whether this be so or not, is it to be doubted that the Conservatives, if it once came to fighting, with wealth, discipline, the crown, the army, and the treasury, with them, would make mince meat of their opponents in a single year; exterminate all the brave rebels, and thoroughly terrify the feeble. No doubt the horror of such an *execution*, for I do not believe there would be anything like fighting, would excite a deadly and fatal animosity, and probably drive some of the more generous allies of the crown over to the popular side. But as to any real gain to the cause of liberty or national prosperity, even from its ultimate success, I see nothing in any futurity to which I can look forward, but the very reverse, &c.

I have been delighting myself with Mackintosh.† I only got the book two days ago, and have done nothing but read it ever since. The richness of his mind intoxicates me. And yet, do not you think he would have been a happier man, and quite as useful and respectable, if he had not fancied it a duty to write a great book? And is not this question an

* The Conservatives he means. † His Memoirs.

answer to your exhortation to me to write a little one? Perpend. I have no sense of duty that way, and feel that the only sure or even probable result of the attempt would be hours and days of anxiety and unwholesome toil, and a closing scene of mortification, &c.

126.—*To Dr. Morehead.*

Skelmorlie, Greenock, 30th Sept. 1835.

My dear Doctor—I have been shamefully idle since I came here, and have done none of the fine things I had expected to do. Among others I thought to have made up all my arrears of correspondence, and poured myself out, in boundless épanchments, to my old friends especially. And, behold, I have not written three letters in three months. I have been very anxious, however, to receive some, and I assure you I have not forgotten my old friends, though I may appear to have neglected them. There are few I have thought of so often as you. This neighbourhood, and this autumn leisure —the first I have had, I think, for twenty good years,—bring fresh to my mind the many pleasant rambles we used to have together when we were less encumbered with cares, and more vacant from all external impressions. That love of nature, and sympathy with her aspects, which was the main source of my delight then, remains more unchanged, I believe, than anything else about me, and still contributes a very large share to my daily enjoy-

ments. I have been reading Homer, too, with as dutiful and docile devotion as we used to do in the old library window at Herbertshire, and with nearly as fresh a relish. I bathe, too, in the sea; and trudge for six or seven miles at a stretch through mud and rain, with a vigour which I think would still distance poor *Dunter*, if he were alive to follow us.

Well, but what I want to know about is, my dear Lockey. I cannot tell how often I think of her, nor how much her heroic cheerfulness adds to the tender interest I take in her sufferings, &c.

We have seen several of our friends at this old castle. We had first the Rutherfurds and the Cockburns; and then Mrs. Russell, and Thomson, and Pillans, and uncle John, and Jane Hunter, and all the Browns in detachments, and Miss Loudoun, and a certain Mr. R. Morehead; and are expecting the Fullertons, and a detachment of the Marshalls of your county of York. We will break up our encampment soon after the 20th of October, make a stage of a few days at Lanfine, and return to Edinburgh on 1st November. My Craigcrook buildings have been roofed in for some time, and everything finished but the plastering.

You will see from the newspaper the progress of O'Connel through our peaceful land. But you will not read there (at least I hope not) that I dined with him at my neighbour Kelly's* a few days ago. After I accepted the invitation, which like a good hus-

* Mr. Wallace of Kelly.

band, I did chiefly to gratify Charlotte's curiosity I had certain misgivings as to my judicial propriety and a fear that I might be tucked up in his tail with a crowd of Glasgow and Greenock radicals, and terrible toasts and speeches. But Wallace Wight dealt more handsomely by me, and we had a very small and strictly private party; consisting of Sir Thomas Brisbane, Sir John Maxwell, and ourselves, and not a word of politics, except a few (uttered of course most constitutionally) by myself. He was perfectly tame and playful, indeed, in his Irish robustious way.

I try to avoid thinking of politics; but it is impossible to be insensible to the perilous movements of the times. It is easy, however, to abstain from prosing about them. My wish and prayer is, that everything tending to actual violence may be avoided; not only for the present unspeakable evil, but because the certain issue of all such contests is the hateful tyranny of the conquering sword, under whatever banner it conquers. I think too that the Tory sword would be the heaviest, and its conquests consequently the most bloody. But those things are not to be thought of.

How is my good patient Mrs. Pinder? and when did she hear of her high-minded little apostle? How is George coming on in his new vocation? and my dear Margaret, with her schools and philanthropy? and Jane, David, Lizzie, and Phemy? We were all very much pleased with Robert when he was here. He is thoughtful and ingenious, and has an evident ambition for intellectual excel-

lence. We have heard nothing of your brother John for some time; but, according to our latest accounts, he was recovering steadily from his alarming attack, and again going about. We have had beautiful weather till within the last ten days; but those have been one incessant tempest. The autumnal gales were never known so tedious.

How do you come on with your parish? and are the *pies* or the *prayers* uppermost in the Sunday thoughts of your flock? Do you make any new sermons, or indulge in any new views? Have you renounced poesy, as old Beeffy* used to call it? or taken to any other path of literary ambition? Do you imbibe any zeal for farming, or take sufficient exercise in the open air? Poor old Dr. Gardner!† He had all the amiableness of a child, and I trust much of the happiness of one; so that he will need little changing to fit him for heaven.

God bless you all, with kindest remembrances.—Ever affectionately yours.

127.—*To Lord Cockburn.*

24 Moray Place, 5th January 1836.

My dear C.—Our good old chief‡ has promised to dine here on Thursday, at half-past five exactly; and I am sure it would be a great pleasure to him

* Dalzell, professor of Greek in Edinburgh.

† An Episcopal clergyman in Edinburgh.

‡ The Right Hon. William Adam, head, or Chief Commissioner, as he was called, of our Jury Court.

to meet you and Richardson at that time. Richardson *can* have no other engagement; and if you have any, you ought to break it—the request of a guest of his age being as much entitled to be treated as a command as that of a royal person. Besides, he is to discourse De Senectute, which both you and I should begin to think an interesting subject.—Ever yours.

128.—*To William Spalding,* Esq., Advocate,*
(Now Professor of Logic and Rhetoric, St. Andrews).

24 Moray Place, 23d May 1836.

Dear Sir—I am afraid I must have appeared very impolite, in not having previously answered your obliging and interesting letter of the 11th. But you are aware that it came at the very commencement of my busy time; and will easily understand that I should have been desirous, both of seeing Professor Moir, and of looking into your little publication, before sending you an answer.

I have not yet been able to see Mr. Moir; but I have run through your book, with very great satisfaction. Without professing to be a convert to all your opinions, I can safely say that I have been very much struck with the spirit and originality of the whole performance; and greatly delighted, both with your feeling and eloquent exposition of the

* Mr. Spalding, then a candidate for the Logic chair in Edinburgh, had sent Lord Jeffrey a copy of his able and interesting "Letter on Shakspere's authorship of The Two Noble Kinsmen."

merits of our great dramatist, and the acute and discriminating analysis you have often so happily made of his means of pleasing. If I am not always satisfied with your logic, your rhetoric almost invariably excites my admiration; and I cannot tell you how much I am gratified by finding another of the younger brethren of our profession so fairly in the way of illustrating it by his literary distinction. With your permission, I shall request my friend Mr. Moir* to give me the pleasure of an introduction to your personal acquaintance; when I hope we shall have some pleasing talk about Shakspere and his contemporaries. You will find me, I think, nearly as great an idolator of his genius as yourself; but rather an unbeliever in the possibility of detecting his compositions by internal evidence. I am inclined, too, to rank Fletcher considerably higher than you seem to do; and think the scene between the captive knights in the second act, which you admit to be all his, by far the finest in the whole play. I think you are quite right, however, in placing Shakspere immeasurably above him in *intellectual* vigour especially, even more than in high passion or burning fancy. The great want of Fletcher is want of common sense; the most miraculous gift of Shakspere, his deep, sound, practical, universal knowledge of human nature, in all ranks, conditions, and fortunes. Yet in their merely pleasing and poetical passages, and in respect to their *taste* in composition, I think they are astonishingly

* George Moir, Esq., Advocate.

alike, and very much on a level. I do not see why Fletcher might not have written all the serious parts of the Winter's Tale; the first scenes of the king's jealousy especially, and those of the sheep-shearing festival, beautiful as they are; and I am sure, if you should make this the thesis of another critical epistle, you could make out quite as good a case for it as you have done for that of your actual election. Autolycus, I admit, is above his pitch; because he has too much sense and shrewdness. Shakspere has the higher tragic passions in far more perfection; but, in pity and mere tenderness, I venture to think Fletcher quite his equal. Do but look to some passages of the Page in Philaster, some of Aspatia in the Maid's Tragedy, and, above all, to the death of that noble boy in Bonduca, which I have always thought, or rather felt, to be the most pathetic passage in English poetry. I must not indulge, however, any farther in this vein; though it may satisfy you that I take a hearty interest in the subject you have chosen for your debût.

I ought not to conclude without saying a word on your pretensions to the chair of Logic. In due time I have no doubt that you will establish a just title to an academical preferment, if this should continue to be an object of ambition with you. But at present, and particularly with regard to the place which is now vacant, I am bound to say, that the more mature age and singular attainments of Sir William Hamilton would determine me, if I had any influence, to give him the preference. In the

meantime, I think you have been well advised in bringing forward your pretensions; as a fair and honourable means of attracting notice to your pursuits and qualifications, and thus entering your name on the "valued file," from which literature will hereafter select her champions and advocates.

For my own part, I cannot but rejoice that you have taken a step which has procured me the pleasure of this correspondence.—Believe me always, &c.

129.—*To Andrew Rutherfurd, Esq.*

Castle Toward, 1st August 1836.

My dear R.—We came on here from Loch Lomond, by Cairndow and Strachur, on Friday, and we cross to-morrow, if the stormy firth should be at all passable, to Largs, where we propose to linger, and treasure up remembrances of Skelmorlie for the rest of the week, and then proceed to Langfine, and be back at Craigcrook somewhere about the 18th. We have had mostly tempestuous weather, though with some heavenly glimpses, and are very comfortable here; Kirkman* having had the good taste not to ask any Glasgow *beaux esprits*, or rustic neighbours, to meet us, and being himself very sociable, sensible, and good humoured, and having one fair daughter, with true dove's eyes, a soft voice, and an angelic expression. Then, being in a mood of drinking no wine, our repasts are far more temperate than I could ever make them with that old

* Kirkman Finlay, Esq., of Castle Toward.

man of the lake, and my heart, which had begun to flutter, being restored to comparative tranquillity. I have been delightfully idle all along, having read to the extent of near five pages in Hallam, and not much more in Shelley. I am sorry to hear so poor an account of Mrs. Pillans, and am glad you enjoy Midfield, and have some leisure to enjoy it. Do you know that I have bought Clermiston for something less than £16,000? and that I want you to take a lease of the house for the term of my life, and we shall run a tunnel through to Craigcrook, and glide unseen from hill to bower, like angels on a sunbeam. Now that *is* a thing to be thought of, or, at all events, to be talked about, if better may not be. I never thought of the thing till the day before I left home. Mr. Thomson of the Royal Bank told me it would be a good purchase, and I gave him power to conclude it for £16,000, and, on my arrival here, I found it was concluded. I hope I shall resist the temptation of ruining myself with improvements.

I try to think little of politics, but the closing scene of this session is nervous, and agitates me a little in spite of myself. I think it has been a very important and interesting session, for, though not much has been *done*, a great deal has been *resisted;* and the waters have appeared to stagnate, only because they are accumulating for a greater outbreak. But we shall soon see now, &c.

This is a fine place; a superb sea view, vast plantations, and an admirable house. The whole

drive from Strachur beautiful. I escaped with my life from the church at Arrochar, though the walls were as black as mud with trickling water, and the floor soaking. There was a deputation of five parsons to Inversnaid, where 200 Highlanders turned out in the rugged glen, and listened, for two hours, to a Gaelic sermon, under a heavy rain, and standing up to the skirts of their kilts in wet heather—and yet nobody died. I was not there—or else there must have been at least one. The new Edinburgh has just come here, and I have been reading part of a nice article on German literature, by George Moir.

130.—*To John Richardson, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 28th November 1836.

My dear Richardson—The melancholy announcement* of your letter did not come unexpected; but still it was a great shock. You are quite right in thinking that she was very dear to us all. I do not believe a spirit ever returned to its maker more free of speck or corruption, or a more affectionate heart ever rested in death.

This is in one sense a consolation, and the best consolation, but at the moment it aggravates the privation. God bless you and comfort you. What more can I say? Dear Hopey must not marry for a while yet.

With best love to her from us all.—Ever affectionate.

* Of the death of Mrs. Richardson.

131.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, 15th.

Macaulay seems to have got charmingly through his estimates. It is in things like these—the *whole business* of governments in quiet times—that the Government is strong. It is weak because there have been great constitutional, almost organic *changes;* and effected, not through overwhelming and paralyzing *force*, but by conflict of *opinions*—in which there is now partly a revulsion, partly a revival, and chiefly a gradual and growing splitting and hiving off of sections and shades, which were blended at first as against a common enemy. Do not you see that this is the course of all weak governments; first the destruction of old unquestioned authority by just and successful resistance; and then the divisions which necessarily ensue among the different parties into which the conquerors naturally array themselves—each in a great degree ignorant of its own actual following in the body, and usually overrating it. So it has ever been, since the feuds among the successors of Alexander or Charlemagne, down to those among the conquerors of Louis Seize —or the earlier dissensions among the survivors of our majestic Cromwell. The former had room and verge enough to betake themselves to separate *regions.* In our narrower confines we had to fight it out at home—and in many a doubtful conflict—till main force and fear brought about a strong government again; and stupidity and want of interest and

intellect restored for about eighty years the old *habit* of submission to authority. We are out of that now over all free Europe, and are once more in the sphere of weak governments,—that is, weak for carrying or resisting any speculative or theoretical changes, or for repressing the vexatious cross play of intractable sects and *cliques;* but strong for maintaining clear rights and demolishing established abuses;—governments which *must* be creditably administered and always growing better, and under which all who are not too impatient or crazily in love with their own nostrums may live in peace and hope. You understand?

132.—*To Andrew Rutherfurd, Esq. (then in London).*

Edinburgh, 17th April 1837.

My dear R.—Now you are in the middle of it! and a pretty stirring centre it is. I envy you a little, but console myself with thinking that I am more tranquil, and a little more secure, where I am. Whatever happens, however, you will be amused, and interested, and instructed, more than if you had staid at home, and if you should come back "*odious in woollen*," before the middle of May, I am sure you will be all the better, and the happier, and the fitter for future service, for this *escapade*. Indeed, I am not sure that it will not be better for you to have thus made your *debût* without incurring any responsibility—to have gone through a sort of *rehearsal*, at the great House, and, along with the great actors,

without the agitation of an actual compearance before a difficult audience.

I thank you for your letter, which is the only intelligible thing I have seen on the actual state of affairs; but I am not so unreasonable as to expect you to write often. Your time is much better employed, and I am a patient waiter upon Providence; yet I should like to have some of your first impressions of men you have not seen particularly before, and of the tone of any new society, but only at your leisure.

I know you will be generous enough not to abuse me to Theresa. You should let her take you some night to the Berrys. I want you to see their circle; and also to like her. She is not only a knowing and clever woman, but really a kind and affectionate. Ask Theresa. I hope you will breakfast with Rogers too. I know you will go to old Wishaw. Tell me, too, about the Lord Advocate, and of the condition you find him in. Glenlee, I understand, is pretty well recovered again, and has begun to read his papers for advising; but it is rather thought he cannot do long—something organically wrong about the stomach; but long and short are but comparative. Poor Keay* has come back from Glasgow, another victim to that abominable court-house, or to ———'s prolixity, it is not clear which, &c.

We are all tolerably well; exercising a frugal and temperate hospitality at Craigcrook—reading

* James Keay, advocate, who had gone to Glasgow on an important civil trial, and was taken ill.

idle books, and blaspheming the weather. We have had Jane Grant ten days with us, and the ——— half as long. Yesterday we had ——— and Lady ———. They parted coldly, though he goes to Aberdeen to-day; and I think there has been a rupture; so you may find her bosom's throne vacant for you when you come back. Cockburn is still in the Cockno burn, with the Dean, at Glasgow. Fullerton has returned, well and sociable, he dines with us to-morrow, &c.

Among other things, I wish you could get some better arrangements for these remits upon Estate Bills* to our learned body. Why should the remit be to the Lord Ordinary officiating on the bills?

133.—*To John Cay, Esq., Sheriff of Linlithgowshire.*

24 Moray Place, 14th August 1837.

My dear Mr. Cay—I thank you very sincerely. for your kindness in sending me a copy of your valuable publication.† But you really make me feel ashamed by the way in which you speak of my exertions in preparing the momentous act which is the subject of your commentary, or of my reception of your many most obliging and judicious suggestions.

That I was conscientiously anxious to embody in clear expression the provisions on which the

* From the House of Lords.

† A volume containing the Decisions of the Sheriffs in the Registration Courts.

Government had agreed, and in so far as possible to exclude cavil and evasion, I of course expected you to allow; but when I look to the multitude of perplexing questions which have notwithstanding arisen, and the many inconveniences which have resulted from what I now see clearly to have been omissions in the framing of that statute, I can truly say that I feel anything but self-satisfaction in the recollection of that task.

As to my intercourse with you, I should be ungrateful if I did not say at once that the obligation was entirely on my part, and that there was no individual whatever to whose sound judgment and sagacity I was so much indebted in the course of that work of preparation. It is very pleasing to me, however, to find that you were satisfied with the manner in which I received your suggestions, and that the communication we then had has had the effect on your part (as it has on mine) of increasing, rather than diminishing, the feeling of confidence and friendship with which, as brethren of our profession, we were previously disposed to regard each other.—Believe me always, &c.

134.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

Brodick, Arran, 29th August 1837.

My dear Mrs. Innes—Charley says I am the idlest member of the family, and ought therefore to answer your letter to her; and as I am sure its kindness deserves an answer, I accept the office, and

hope for indulgence as her substitute. But I have no news to tell you. In this fortunate island we know nothing of the wicked doings of the busy world which you still inhabit; and, except through a stale newspaper, hear nothing of what is agitating the mainland of Great Britain and Ireland. In fine weather I take very kindly to this innocent and primitive state of ignorance of good and evil, and reason and muse by the quiet waters and lonely valleys, in a very voluptuous and exemplary way. But in a rainy day like this, I feel my poetical soul subside, and cannot resist a recurrence to interests which ought not to be so powerful with a grave judge or contemplative philosopher. I must even confess that at such times those dignified characters lose a little of their majesty in my eyes, and that I feel as if it were something *womanish* to sit safe and idle here in a corner, when all who have men's hearts in their bosoms are up and doing. It mortifies me a little to find that there is a closer alliance between gowns and petticoats than I had imagined, and then I think that the curiosity with which I am devoured in these woods is another feminine trait which does me no honour.

Well, but you want to hear how we like Arran, and what sort of life we lead here. On the whole, it has been very pleasant. Delicious weather, grand mountain views, wild rocky valleys, the brightest of bright waters—both fresh and salt; and here at Brodick a graceful crescent-shaped bay of a mile over, with the old castle peering over its woods at

one point, and a noble black cliff at the other; and then, beyond the bright gravel of the beach, a sweet deep-green valley, glittering with streams, and tufted all over with groups of waving ash trees, winding away for two miles or more among the roots of the mountains, some of which soar up in bare peaks of grey granite, and others show their detached sides and ends—all seamed with dark gullies stretching down from their notched and jagged summits. There is a description for you, and quite true notwithstanding. And we have attended two preachings in the open air (worth ten of your idolatrous masses), and heard the voice of psalms rise softly in the calm air from a scattery group of plaided and snooded worshippers, and go echoing up among the hills, and down to the answering murmurs of the shore; and I have subscribed £10 to build a new church on the beautiful spot where this congregation met under the canopy of Heaven. As for our hostel, the people are simple and obliging, and we have nice whitings, and occasional salmon, and tough fowls, and good whisky, and bad wine. But the worst is, that a fat woman had engaged the best rooms before we came, and one of the supreme judges of the land has actually been condemned to sleep, with his lawful wife, for the last ten days, in a little sultry garret, where it is impossible to stand upright, except in the centre, or to point your toes up when you lie down, for the low slanting roof, which comes crushing down on them. But we are not difficult, or *prideful* you know, and have really

suffered no serious discomfort. To me, indeed, the homeliness of the whole scene brings back recollections of a touching and endearing sort; and when I lay down the first night, and saw the moon shining in through the little uncurtained sliding windows in the roof, on the sort of horse rug on the floor, and the naked white walls, and two straw chairs, it brought so freshly to my mind the many similar apartments I had occupied with delight in the lonely wanderings of my school and college days, that I felt all my young enthusiasm revive, and forgot judgeship and politics, and gave myself up to my long cherished dreams of poetry and love. God help us. But we leave this enchanted island on Monday morning at five o'clock, alas! and, if we survive that horror, expect to get to Craigcrook that evening; so write west to Edinburgh.

I am glad to hear that you have been amused, but more glad that you think with pleasure of your return. Home is best, after all, for good people. Why do you stay away from it so long as to 8th August? Innes is an idle fellow, and always exceeds his furloughs. I shall have Murray to reprimand him. In the meantime, God bless you both.—Ever yours.

I am pretty well again, I thank you, and can walk six or seven miles again well enough, either in sunshine or rain.

135.—*To John Richardson, Esq.*

Craigcrook, Thursday, 7th September 1837.

My dear Richardson—I am ashamed to have *two* kind letters to answer, and in my time of vacation, &c.

We ran to Arran for a fortnight with Empson, soon after the courts were over, and we have been entangled ever since with a succession of visitors. We had the Listers for a fortnight; and then the tuneful Sergeant Talfourd; and then Sir J. and Lady A. Dalrymple; and now we have my old friend Mr. W. Morehead, after twelve years of India; and I fear have invited others of whose approach we expect to hear daily, and are not at liberty to disappoint, though I do by no means give up the hope of seeing Kirklands this season. I must therefore free you from all restraint as to your own engagements, and only beg that you would try to put one to Craigcrook as near the top of your list as possible. We shall probably go for a short time to my sister's in Ayrshire, about the end of this month. But except that (and the hope of Kirklands), I see little to disturb our residence here for the remainder of the autumn. Do come, therefore, with my dear Hope,* and as many more as you can, and let us have a tranquil week, and some pensive and cheerful retrospections among my shades, to soothe our declining days, and enable them the better to stand a comparison with those that are gone by. There are few things would give me so much pleasure, or do me so much good, and

* Miss Richardson.

I think it would not be disagreeable or hurtful to you, &c.

I have a strong pull at my heart towards Minto,* and what you say of them gives it a fresh tug; but my anchor is too deep in the mud to let me move for the present. Why do none of them ever come here, &c.—Ever affectionately yours.

136.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Craigcrook, 11th November 1837.

Postremum hunc Arethusa!

We go to Edinburgh to-morrow, and I shall indite no more to you this year from rustic towers and coloured woods. They have been very lonely and tranquil all day, and with no more sadness than becomes parting lovers; and now there is a glorious full moon, looking from the brightest pale sea-green sky you ever saw in your life. I was peevish, I think, when I wrote last to you; and I fancy you think so too, since you have taken no notice of me since. But I have been long out of that mood, so you need not resent it any longer, and I really do not require any castigation for my amendment, for it is not a common mood of *my* mind, and shall not come back soon. I do not quite like this move, though I believe my chief repugnance is to the early rising which awaits me, and for which I have been training myself for the last fortnight by regularly remaining in bed till after

* The seat of the Earl of Minto.

ten o'clock. You cannot think with what a pious longing I shall now look forward to Sundays. In the last week I have read all *Burns'* life and works—not without many tears, for the life especially. What touches me most is the pitiable poverty in which that gifted being (and his noble-minded father) passed his early days—the painful frugality to which their innocence was doomed, and the thought, how small a share of the useless luxuries in which *we* (such comparatively poor creatures) indulge, would have sufficed to shed joy and cheerfulness in their dwellings, and perhaps to have saved that glorious spirit from the trials and temptations under which he fell so prematurely. Oh my dear Empson, there must be something *terribly* wrong in the present arrangements of the universe, when those things can happen, and be thought natural. I could lie down in the dirt, and cry and grovel there, I think, for a century, to save such a soul as Burns from the suffering and the contamination and the *degradation* which these same arrangements imposed upon him; and I fancy, that, if I could but have known him, in my present state of wealth and influence, I might have saved, and reclaimed, and preserved him, even to the present day. He would not have been so old as my brother judge Lord Glenlee, or Lord Lynedoch, or a dozen others that one meets daily in society. And what a creature, not only in genius, but in nobleness of character; potentially at least, if right models had been put *gently* before him. But we must not dwell on it. You south Saxons

cannot value him rightly, and miss half the pathos, and more than half the sweetness. There is no such mistake as that your chief miss is in the *humour* or the shrewd sense. It is in far higher and more delicate elements—God help you! We shall be up to the whole, I trust, in another world. When I think of *his* position, I have no feeling for the *ideal* poverty of your Wordsworths and Coleridges; comfortable, flattered, very spoiled, capricious, idle beings, fantastically discontented because they cannot make an easy tour to Italy, and buy casts and cameos; and what poor, peddling, whining drivellers in comparison with him! But I will have no uncharity. They too should have been richer.

Do you know *Berchet*, a patriot and poet, of course an exile, of Lombardy? He has come home for the winter, partly to superintend the studies of a young Marchese D'Arconati, and partly to diversify his exile. He dined here yesterday, and seems a vigorous cosmopolitish man, but I do not know his poetry. He was a friend of Manzoni and Foscolo, and knew Pecchio very well. I think he will be acceptable to the judicious, and I am sure you will be glad to see him, &c.—Ever yours.

137.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, 26th November 1837.

My dear E.—I should like to be in town now in these chopping and changing times. Our pilot made

an ugly yaw on first leaving his moorings; and, with tide and time of his own choosing, fairly ran on a reef before he was well under weigh. This lift of the wave among the *pensions* seems, however, to have floated him off again; and we are now in smooth water, I hope, without much more danger than a bit of our false keel or so torn off. Still it was an awkward accident, and abates one's confidence considerably as to any foul weather that may be brewing for us. Do write me what is expected. I fear the "fierce democraty" of our constitution is now to be separated from its more emollient ingredients—and presented in pure extract—as embodying its whole virtue. I have no such faith in Dr. Wakley as to taste a bit of it upon his recommendation. But I am afraid many will be rash enough to make the experiment; and who can answer for the danger? I wish somebody would write a good paper on the nature and degree of *authority* which is requisite for anything like a permanent government, and upon the plain danger of doing what might be right for a *perfectly instructed* society, for one just enough instructed to think itself fit for anything. I am myself inclined to doubt, I own, whether any degree of instruction would make it safe to give equal political power to the large poor classes of a fully peopled country as to the smaller and more wealthy; though the experience of America might encourage one as to this, if there were only a little more poverty, and a little more press of population, to test the experiment. But we shall see. With us the

change could not be peaceable, and I do not think could be made at all; the chances being that we should pass at once from civil war to a canting military despotism.

I am very sorry about your London university schismatics; and am rather mortified that Arnold should be so sticklish. But if he means only that your classical graduates should know the unclassical Greek of the N. T., as well as that of Plato and Xenophon, I think you should not hesitate to indulge him. If the examination is to be in the *doctrine*, as well as the *language*—and truly an examination in the *theology* rather than in *classics*—the difficulty no doubt will be greater, and his unreasonableness more surprising. Yet even then (though I feel that the advice may seem cowardly), seeing the ruinous, and even *fatal* consequences that would follow from the secession of all your *clerical* associates, I believe your better course will be to comply—making the best terms you can for tender consciences and special cases. I do not much like the counsel I give you, and shall be glad if you find you can do justice to the institution by following an opposite one. But I do not see how.

I am much touched with what you say of Wishaw. I was not at all aware that his sight was so very much decayed. But I think he is fortunate beyond most unmarried men, in being the object of more cordial kindness than such solitaries usually attract; and in having so great a society of persons, of all ages, sexes, and occupations, willing to oc-

cupy themselves about him. His kindness, I do think, has *fructified* more than that of most people, and been the cause of kindness in others to a larger extent. Do remember me to him, and assure him of the interest I shall always take in him.

138.—*To Mr. Empson,*

(Who had sent him a letter from Mr. Macaulay, stating reasons for preferring a literary to a political life).

Edinburgh, 19th December 1837.

My dear E.—I return Macaulay's.

. . . . . .

It is a very striking and interesting letter; and certainly puts the *pros* and *cons* as to public life in a powerful way for the latter. But, after all, will either human motives or human duties ever bear such a dissection? and should we not all become Hownynyms or Quakers, and selfish cowardly fellows, if we were to act on views so systematic? Who the devil would ever have any thing to do with love or war, nay, who would venture himself on the sea, or on a galloping horse, if he were to calculate in this way the chances of shortening life or forfeiting comfort by such venturesome doings? And is there not a vocation in the gifts which fit us for particular stations to which it is a duty to listen? Addison and Gibbon did well to write, because they *could* not speak in public. But is that any rule for M.? And then as to the tranquillity of an author's life, I confess I have no sort of faith in it, and am

sure that as eloquent a picture might be drawn of its cares, and fears, and mortifications, its feverish anxieties, humiliating rivalries and jealousies, and heart-sinking exhaustion, as he has set before us of a statesman. And as to fame, if an author's is now and then more lasting, it is generally longer withheld, and, except in a few rare cases, it is of a less pervading or elevating description. A great poet, or great *original* writer, is above all other glory. But who would give much for such a glory as Gibbon's. Besides, I believe it is in the inward glow and pride of consciously influencing the great destinies of mankind, much more than in the sense of personal reputation, that the delight of either poet or statesman chiefly consists. Shakspere plainly cared nothing about his glory, and Milton referred it to other ages. And, after all, why not be *both* statesmen and authors, like Burke and Clarendon. I do not know why I write all this, for I really am very busy, and it is such idle talking. Come and we shall have the talk out more comfortably. It is very warm here for the last four days. The thermometer always above fifty. With kindest remembrances to Marianne.—Ever yours.

139.—*To the Solicitor-General (Rutherfurd).*

Northallerton, Tuesday Evening,
22d March 1838.

My dear Solicitor—On very well you see; through a blustering cold equinoctial day as might be. The

roads rather heavy, from recent repairs, and severe wet, but nothing extraordinary. Very good indeed from Haddington to Berwick, and quite sound all along; patches of snow in corners till past Morpeth. We made Alnwick before eight last night. Here to-night half an hour later, though earlier off. The English roads the most hilly. Mr. Hirst keeps capital fires, and the prize ox at Rushyford furnished an admirable cold sirloin. I have been reading Sir Walter's last volume* with great interest, and growing love for his real kindness of nature. It does one good to find some of the coarsenesses of the former volumes so nobly redeemed in this. Poor Scott! could we but have him back, it seems to me as if we would make more of him. I have had strong pullings at the heart homewards again, and feel half as if I were too old and lazy for any other place now. But there is room in London for quiet lookers on, as well as for the more spirited actors; and there is no place, I believe, where a good listener and indulgent spectator is more popular. You are decorating yourself at this moment, I suppose, to grace Lady ———'s racketty ball. If you wish to please her, stay very late, and drink a great deal of noisy champagne. Write to say when we may look for you.

* Of his Life.

140.—*To Mrs. Empson,*

(Who had left him, some weeks after her marriage).

Edinburgh, Thursday, one o'clock,
13th September 1838.

My dear Charley—You have had a nice time of it. Calm and warm all night, and now bright balmy summer, with no more wind than just to wave the awning under which I now see you sitting, looking out on the clear sea, and the varying shore, and leaning, not *too* tenderly I hope, on Empson! We got over yesterday very well. I believe I was the most disturbed of the party; but a kind of horror of the water, and anxiety about your safety, made part of my uneasiness. It was a relief when the servants came back, and reported that you were safe, and not uncomfortable aboard, and that you had found a *dandie*, who was to supply the loss of poor Witchy. Your mother drank two bumpers of claret, and slept on the sofa. I read Peter M'Culloch, though with something of a wavering attention. The most pathetic occurrence of the evening was poor Witchy* bouncing out of our bed when I went up to it, and running to the door leading to your little old deserted room, and howling low and sweet at it for some time. She had missed you down stairs, and had evidently been struck with the notion that you were down there, sick, and neglected of all but her! We soothed her as well as we could, and took her to our bosoms, where she lay like a dead dog, still

* A little dog.

and dispirited, the whole night. She is rather out of sorts still this morning. I am glad it is bright again; for though I defy skyey influences, and am pleased with such weather as pleases God, I feel that there is something cheerful in mild clear sunshine. It is really very sweet to-day. The thermometer is sixty-one, and, after the dewing of yesterday, everything is so fresh and fragrant! How is it in New Street? Your Spring Gardens will stand no comparison with our autumn one. And yet the Park will be pretty, especially in this season of London solitude, &c.

How is Whitey? Her Scotch voice, I hope, will not soon grow distasteful to your ears. Bless you. —Ever yours.

141.—*To the Lord Advocate (Rutherfurd).*

Craigcrook, Monday, 3d June 1839.

My dear R.—Why the devil do you not say something in Parliament, while yet it is called to-day, and before the night cometh, when no man can speak? Let your mouth then be opened, if it were only for once, like that of Balaam's ass, and let my cudgel provoke you, if not the abundance of the heart! I glance over every newspaper, in hopes of finding your name at the top of a long column—broken with cheers; but there you are mute as a fish, and only figuring in the miraculous draft of a large division. If you cannot get your Scotch Voters' Bill on soon, you should speak on the *Education* ques-

tion—on which speeches enough, I fear, will be needed. But it is properly a *Scotch* question; for why the devil should our *Presbyterian* party be taxed to support schools exclusively *Episcopal?* I wish they had left the accredited *Bibles* in possession of their monopoly; and if *this* were conceded, I cannot but think that the great difficulty would be got over.

Macaulay has got on beautifully here, and not only delighted all true and reasonable Whigs, but surprisingly mollified both Tories and Radicals. They will give him no trouble to-morrow, unless some blackguard radicals should hold up their dirty hands and bellow at the nomination. But I think there is no chance of this. The more he is known, however, the more he is liked. He relies a great deal on you, for counsel and information on all local questions; and I have undertaken that you shall not grudge him your assistance.

We have no news here now that the Venerable has closed its sittings; the most memorable, and likely to be remembered, since 1638.*

God bless you my dear R. I find nobody here to fill your place, though I am generous enough not to wish you back before August.

142.—*To George J. Bell, Esq.*

Craigcrook, Sunday Evening, 7th July 1839.

My dear Bell—It is very pleasing to have such letters written to one's friend, and of one's profes-

* The General Assembly, called the Venerable.

sion and country; and still more pleasant to think that we (in some sort) deserve to be so written of. If we were all as zealous and unwearied in the discharge of our duties as you are, we should have more of the latter feeling. As it is, it must be chastised, I fear in most, by many compunctious visitings. But you may always look back to such memorials as this without a pang of self-reproach.* God bless you.—Ever faithfully yours.

143.—*To Mrs. Rutherfurd.*

Craigcrook, 14th July 1839.

My sweet, gentle, and long-suffering Sophia—Your (just) resentment is terrible enough at a distance; but it would kill me at hand, and therefore I *must* mollify it, in some way or another, before you come down; for you know I could never live to see you "into terror turn your countenance, too severe to behold!" What, then, shall I say to appease you? What, but that I am a miserable sinner? and yet more miserable than sinning, for I am old and indolent, and yet forced to work like a young tiger, and obliged to walk to keep my stagnating blood in motion, till, with toil and *early rising*, I am overtaken with sleep in the afternoons, and have scarcely time and vigour for my necessary labours. "Ah little think the gay licentious proud!"

* Mr. Bell had sent him two letters, written by Kent and Story, the eminent American lawyers, on their receiving copies of Bell's "Principles."

And then I have grown (and high time too) so conscious of my failings, and diffident of my powers of pleasing, and so possessed with the dread of your increased fastidiousness in that great scornful London, and of the *odiousness* of the comparisons to which I would subject myself, that, altogether, and upon the whole, you see, it has been as it were, or as you would say, impossible, or at least not easy, to answer your kind and entertaining letter with anything but kindness; which I thought might be despised, or not thought good enough for you, and so forth! And so you understand all about it, and *must* forgive me, whether you will or not; and pity me into the bargain—with that pity which melts the soul to love—and so we are friends again. And you shall be received into my heart, whenever you like, and if you see anything there that offends you I shall give you leave to pluck it out.

We baptised little Charley yesterday, with perfect success. It would have done your heart good to have seen with what earnestness she renounced the devil, and the vain pomp and glory of the world, as she lay sputtering off the cold water, in the arms of the Rev. C. Terrot. The ceremony was at two o'clock, and then we had lunch and champagne, and then all the party reeled out, some to the greenwood shade, and some to the bowling-green—where I won three shillings from Cockburn (quite fairly) by the sweat of my brow, and then we had a jolly dinner—and the loveliest summer day ever seen so far to the north. But I have said all this to Rutherfurd

already, and fear I am falling into dotage. Her Majesty's ship, the Benbow, of 74 guns, has been lying in our roadstead for three weeks, and is visited daily by incredible crowds of idle people. Last Sunday there were no fewer than 3000. I do not ask you to believe that, on my word, but on that of the gallant Captain Houston Stewart, who told me so, as I sat by him at a drunken dinner of the Northern Lights last Thursday, and, moreover, assured me that he had never used more than two dozen of champagne on any one day—(Josy Hume should be told how our naval stores go). I hate the water too much to follow the multitude; but Charley (*the first*) had not so much sense, and went one day with Lady Bell. Charley (*the second*) was wiser, and staid with me. Moreover, Lady Bell and her husband have almost fixed on building a little cottage on a corner of my Clermiston farm, close to my boundary on the west, near the open space where there are cottages, and a very fine view. But they say the chief charm is, that they can see Ratho* from it. Ah! poor deserted Ratho! and when not deserted, destined to be filled with all the corrupt overflowings of London, and the Houses of Parliament; and to resound to the echo of metropolitan riot and intemperate insolence! Oh peaceful shades! oh fields beloved in *vain!* where once my careless Sophy strayed, a stranger yet to *Town!* God help us. But you will come back,

* A place a few miles from Edinburgh, which the Rutherfurds had a lease of.

and I may find a soft evening hour to revive these innocent recollections. Lowry Cockburn has been down for a few days, and has gone again to London. His mother says he is paying them another visit before encountering another shipwreck. But I do not see the good of having the pain of a third parting. She was rather low, I thought, yesterday, though full of motherly kindness to all us young people. The Murrays go towards Strachur on Thursday—full of projects for furnishing, fishing, and beautifying. I hope she is rather better. Lauder is very happy with his new appointment. M'Bean has renewed his wig, and looks as young as a viper who has just cast his enamelled skin.

144.—*To the Lord Advocate (Rutherfurd).*

Craigcrook, Tuesday, 13th August 1839.

My dear R.—You must be coming back to us at last. "Time and the hours run through the roughest day;" and I reckon fully on seeing you here before my spell in the bill-chamber, *vice* Glenlee, is over, on the 26th, &c.

We are still very quiet and patriarchal here, and our tranquillity has not yet been disturbed by the Chartist rites of the sacred month, or any other of their unhallowed doings. Yet I have a deep and painful impression that it cannot end now without bloodshed, and that not by driblets on the scaffold, but by gushes on the field. It is miserable; but I see no other issue, and can only pray that those who

are sure to suffer may be first put *flagrantly* in the wrong.

I am disappointed that the session is to close without your having given the Commons a taste of your quality, and only hope that the length of your silent noviciate will not make you more unwilling to speak when your tongue is at last loosened. The Lords will have done something to keep you in wind. I fancy you have had stiff work there, &c.

I was delighted to see Sophia's fair hand again, but had no idea how frightfully ill she had been. I have a letter of the same strain from fair Theresa Lister, who seems to have been still worse. But I trust both are out of the scrape now, and will have purchased a long holiday by this rough service. There is something voluptuous in a steady and idle convalescence in fine weather, and among kind people. "The common air, the sun, the sky, &c."

I suspect you will find Edinburgh a desert. Even Douce Davy* has hidden himself in shades, and gone for a whole month to the country, for the first time, I believe, since he was a W.S. But you have had enough of *town*, I fancy, and will be glad enough to meditate in the fields at eventide with me, at Ratho or Craigcrook; unless, indeed, you were to break a spear at the *tournament*, which seems to me a very operose piece of dullness.

Well, come quickly! *quid plura*, &c.—Ever yours.

* Mr. David Cleghorn, Crown-Agent, a most excellent man.

145.—*To Mrs. Pennington.*

Dunkeld, Friday, 20th September 1839.

My dearest Jane—I thought I should have written to you from Rothiemurchus!* Would not that have been nice? But I cannot get any nearer. I had resolved to visit E. Ellice at Invereshie, when I certainly should have made a pilgrimage to the Doun, but I was stopped by visitors I could not decline, and now must hurry back for certain judicial duties, which the new law has put on our vacation, and for which I must be at my post next Monday. It is something, however, to have peeped even so far into the threshold of your central highlands, to have smelt the peat smoke of your cottages, heard the sweet chime of your rocky cascades, and seen your shiny cliffs starting from every birch and dark pine, and the blue ridges of your distant hills melting into the inland sky. I need not tell *you* what recollections are awakened by these objects, nor how fresh, at such moments, all the visions of youth, and the deeper tinted, and scarcely less glorious, dreams of manhood, come back upon the heart. I have been thinking, all day, of one of the last, I rather think it was *the* last, time I saw you at Rothiemurchus, and of a long rambling ride we had, upon ponies, through the solemn twilight of a dark autumnal day. The birches and oak copses were all of a deep tawny yellow, the pines, spreading far over the plains, of an inky blue, a broad band of saffron light

* The seat of Mrs. Pennington's family.

gleaming sadly in the west, and the Spey sweeping and sounding hoarsely below us, as we paused, for a long time, on a height near the gamekeeper's house. Have you any recollection of that same? I remember it as if it were yesterday, or rather feel it as if it were still before me. Why, or how, I cannot tell. But there it is; as vivid, and clear, and real, as when it was present to my senses. And it is as real and true, if memory and feeling be as much parts of our nature as our senses, and give us the same assurance of the existence of their objects. But I did not mean to write thus to you, but to answer your letter as it ought to be answered. The air of your mountains has disordered me, but I am sober again, and proceed, &c.

146.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Thursday, 23d January 1840.

Thank you for your pleasant letter of Tuesday, and for liking Dollylolly. I wonder you are not more struck with the likeness to papa; except indeed that she is so much handsomer. *R.* says you are looking peculiarly well, and ventures to add, that he thinks you *every way improved*, which conveys an insinuation against your Scotch breeding and *façons*, which I do not entirely relish. I hope you will never improve out of your old simplicity and unambitious sweetness, or even out of those thoughtful traits of nationality, which I think (and you used to think) so loveable. Give me assurance, if you please,

of this. Before I forget, let me give you, my love, a little exhortation against over anxiety about Empson's health, which I have several times resolved lately to address to you. I fear you have something of this spirit in your nature, or at least in your habits, which it is really of great consequence to repress, and, if possible, eradicate. It is very much a matter of habit, and, if not altogether voluntary, capable at least of being very much restrained by a steady volition and effort against it. It is a source of great and useless misery,—the vigilance requisite for all practicable precautions being perfectly consistent with a habit of hopefulness and trust, and with the power of distracting the mind from the contemplation of contingent disasters. Even when danger is pretty imminent, and the odds considerable on its side, there is great virtue, and I need not say relief, in this power of abstraction and compulsory forgetfulness. But to dwell habitually upon remote and improbable calamities, is not only a weakness and a misery, but a vice; and so pray "be not over exquisite (as the divine Milton hath it) to cast the shadows of uncertain evils;"—and so I have done. But do not laugh at this, but recal it, and make an effort, when you are tempted to fall into those gloomy views. God bless you. I dined with Macaulay yesterday at the Provost's, where we *dualized*. The talk very much as at ——'s. But, except on those two occasions, I have scarcely seen him, so much is he distracted by meetings, deputations, and correspondence. The election went off quietly to-

day; no show of opposition, and, as the day was bad, no great attendance, and short speaking. They were taking down the hustings when I came out of court at half-past four. His speech on Tuesday, I hear, was admirable. We send you a copy of the Caledonian.* He is to have a great dinner to-day, and to be off by the evening mail, and may see you as soon as this. I am sorry I had so little of him. But I expected no better. Dolly perfect still; very fond of sweet wine; and bites and sucks my finger, long after she has licked off what has stuck to it. She likes one to murmur softly into her ears, and to have her face lightly brushed by my grey hair. I cannot tell you yet to what Tory the gown will be offered; but I may to-morrow.

147.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

Edinburgh, Thursday, 6th February 1840.

My dear Mrs. Innes—

. . . . . .

I forgot to applaud your purpose of entering on that best study. But I do not believe you could ever doubt that I would applaud it. O yes! read, and read, in those Scriptures, as often, as largely, and *as carefully*, as you can; only take care not to surfeit yourself, by taking too much sweet at a time; and, still more, beware of stupifying yourself, by poring and plodding in search of a profound meaning, which you fear you may not have seen, or a latent beauty which you fancy may have escaped you. There are

* Caledonian Mercury, an Edinburgh newspaper.

no such hidden mysteries in Shakspeare. He is level to all capacities, and "speaks, with every tongue, to every purpose." The diction, which is mostly that of his age, may occasionally perplex those who are not familiar with it at first. But that is soon got over, and then you have only to give him and yourself *fair play*, by reading when you are in the right mood, and that with reasonable attention, which one who likes flowers and fine scenery will always give to such things when they are around his path, instead of hurrying on inobservant to the journey's end. It is of some consequence, perhaps, if you are really to go through the whole series of plays (which I earnestly recommend), to know with which you had best begin. But I am not sure that I know enough of your tastes, and probable repugnances, to be able to advise you.

The single play which has more of the prodigality of high fancy, united with infinite discrimination of character, and moral wisdom and pathos, than any other, is *Hamlet*. But then it has so much of what is wayward and unaccountable, that, if you are apt to be perplexed with such things, you might probably do best to begin with *Othello*, which, with less exuberance and variety, is full of deep feeling, force, and dignity; and all perfectly consistent, smooth, and intelligible. And then take *Macbeth*, which, in spite of its witches and goblins, has the same recommendation of not startling you with strangeness and wild fancies, but keeps the solemn tenor of its way, right on to the grand conclusion. For the *comedies*, the

two Parts of *Henry IV.* and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, are about the best; though *As You Like It* is more airy, graceful, and elegant, and, to my taste, though less powerful and inventive, on the whole more agreeable. But now, if you rejoice in the sweet diction and delicate fancies of the truly poetical parts of these plays, you may proceed to the more ethereal revelations of the *Tempest* and the *Midsummer's Dream*, and all the bright magic of *Ariel* and *Titania*. And what things these are! and how they have illumined and perfumed our lower world, by the play of their sweet immortality, and the wafture of their shining wings! Then that best romance of youth and love—the *Romeo and Juliet*—and the gracious Idyll of *Perdita*, and the great sea of tears poured out in *Lear*, and the sweet austere composure and purity of Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, and the sublime misanthropy of *Timon;* and—but there is no end to this—and those are the best of them. Only I must say a word for the glorious and gorgeous abandonment of *Antony and Cleopatra*, through the whole of which you breathe an atmosphere of intoxication and heroic voluptuousness; and the gentle majesty of *Brutus* and his *Portia*, in contrast with the stern and noble pride and indignation of *Coriolanus*. There, now, you see what it is to set me off upon Shakspeare! But it is to set you on him, and that must be my apology; besides that I could not help it. To end my lecture, I will only say, do not read too fast. Two days to one play will not be too much; and look back to them again as often as you

please. And do not read every day, unless you have a call that way. And so God prosper your pleasant studies, and bless them for your good.

I do not think I have any news for you. I hope you were satisfied with *the Division*, and are not in such despair about the Government as you were lately, though there is still need enough to join trembling with your mirth. I was really shocked at your confession of *Tory* propensities. What could have given a disposition like yours a bias to so hard-hearted and insolent a creed? But I hope you are now thoroughly converted from the error of your ways, and look with proper humiliation on the sins of your youth, &c.

Our Dolly has got a fifth tooth! and as easily as all the former. She saw her own blood for the first time yesterday, and was much pleased with its fine colour, which she daubed all over the table-cloth and my face with much hearty laughter, having cut her finger with a bit of sharp glass. For my part, I do not understand how the little wretch's blood comes to be so red, when she has never eaten anything but white milk! Can you expound that mystery? &c.—Ever very affectionately yours.

148.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Thursday, 20th February 1840.

. . . . . .

I had a long lonely thoughtful walk to-day—after leaving the court—first among the strange

narrow gloomy little lanes, running down from the High Street, which I used to frequent in my boyish days, and in which I am offended with various mean *new* houses which have come in place of the old tumble-down black fetid piles, which were my acquaintances of yore; and then out round the skirts of Arthur's Seat and the Crags, where there are far fewer traces of recent innovation, but a great entireness and fixity of old loneliness and beauty, and old associations. I looked rather mournfully to a steep ascent, up which I escorted your mother to the craggy summit just about thirty years ago (and so some few years before you were born), and formed a bold resolution to climb it again with her the first fine day;—but to-day is not fine nor any day this week. It is east wind still, and has been dropping small siftings of snow or hail through the black sky for the last forty-eight hours. Thermometer about forty. Dolly is perfect—with a perpendicular ridge up her forehead like the sharp edge of a wig-block. You understand? very funny though—and her hair growing nicely, of a bright metallic lustre, and reasonably thick on the *apex* of her head, though peaked at the temples still as you may see in the picture. God bless you, dearest. In about a month shall we not be coming to you? and this is the shortest month too of all.—Ever yours.

149.—*To Mr. Empson*

Edinburgh, Wednesday, 4th May 1840.

I do not believe your Frenchman who says that a Napoleon—that is, a Napoleon feeding on *derived* claims and memories—could have any chance, if there was an open competition for French sovereignty. What *another incarnation* of the last potent spirit might do in France, or anywhere, is another question. But I do not believe there is any such hankering after *conscriptions* and a *military despotism* (for that is the synonim of military glory, and well enough understood) among the really influential classes in France, as to give any chance for a mere military chief, much less for an alien who has achieved no glory for himself. All that is mere chatter, and only proves that there is much discontent, and much loose thinking and talking on great subjects, which we scarcely needed a man to come across the Channel to tell us. How odd it is that there can be *no strong governments* now in free countries! I think I see the theory of this, and it would make a pretty *pendant* to yours of *open questions*, and belongs to the same category. Do you see the bearings? or shall I take half a sheet by and by and unfold them? You see the Tory lords are pressing Government now for an act to settle our despised Non-Intrusion friends, and the bishops taking part in it too, and wishing the abuses of patronage to be repressed by the legislature in England, as well as in Scotland! Bravo! But if we in the north are

not to get more protection from that abuse than your English bishops will support for you, we must go to our hill sides and conventicles again. But we will get enow, and *must*, or it will be *taken*. I hear nothing authentic of Perthshire to-day, except that both sides talk big, which may be believed on slight testimony. Fox Maule coming in person is worth fifty votes at least—an admirable canvasser, and so personally popular.

150.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

Edinburgh, Tuesday, 2d June 1840.

My dear Mrs. Innes—Though I have nothing new to tell you, I feel that I must write to say that I hope you were gratified, or at least *relieved*, by the tidings I brought to Innes yesterday.* It is small promotion certainly, but there is something tranquillising in the sense of *security*, and I trust it is but the harbinger of future good. Progress and hope, in worldly affairs at least, are far better than ultimate prosperity; and the moderate and successive advances by which patient merit makes its way to distinction and opulence are a thousand times more enviable than the dull possession of them by those to whom they have always been familiar.

There is no post to-day, so that there will be no formal communication till to-morrow. But I can no longer have any doubt about the result, &c.

Lord Meadowbank's sick daughter is dead, poor

* Of his being made Sheriff of Morayshire.

thing. How life steals or starts away from us! and how little it alters some people, I mean internally, in its course. I can remember the events, and look back on the feelings of *half a century*, and I do not feel that I am different, in any material respect, from what I was when I went to College at Glasgow in 1790. I ought to be ashamed, I suppose, at not having improved more in that long time; but I cannot help it. Do you think anything can be done for me yet? &c.

I do not get on very well with my work, and am afraid this half Craigcrook life is against it, though I should grudge abridging it for C.'s sake and Dolly's; both are so well there, and enjoy it so much, &c.

I have been in Exchequer till near four, and have scarcely time to do what is needful, so, with kindest love to all your loving household, believe me also your loving friend.

151.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Saturday, 27th June 1840.

. . . . . .

You know that no man can well care less for the pretensions of churches, or be less disposed to abet them than I am; and if it were a mere question of church against patrons or judges, my dispositions would rank me on the side of the latter. But it is from my strong impression of the *social* and *political* mischiefs which this unconciliatory spirit is likely

to breed, that I very deeply deplore anything that tends to excite it. If the advocates of *Intrusion*, or those who are now so called, are permitted to go on, the result will be the secession, from the established church, of the better half (in all senses) of its present pastors, and, probably, as large a proportion of their flocks. There are already more than a fourth of the population in the ranks of *Presbyterian* dissent, and if this result occurs, they will be a decided majority, and the Established Church, drawing all the tithes, and monopolising the whole benefices, will be *the church of a minority, as in Ireland.* The effect of such a state of things on the peace and temper of the people, we have only to look to that country to learn. And here, the same consequences would infallibly follow, with *increased* discontent and heartburning, from the knowledge of the fact that the schism was produced, not by any radical and irreconcileable difference of *creed*, but solely for the sake of maintaining the civil, and utterly worthless, rights of a few lay patrons, in their harshest and most unmitigated form. It will not do to mock at follies leading to such consequences as those. God bless you.—Ever affectionately yours.

152.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

Dunkeld, Thursday Night.
13th August 1840.

My dear Mrs. Innes—I wrote to you last Saturday, and here I am writing to you again, not be-

cause I have anything very interesting to tell you, but (I suppose) because I am some sixty miles nearer you than I was then, and so more under the influence of the elective affinities. Then it is such beautiful weather in these northern latitudes of ours, and all the rest have gone to their lazy beds, and left me alone in this splendid parlour of the Bridge Inn, with the broad Tay shining like quicksilver before its windows, under the loveliest and brightest moon you ever saw, hanging over dark mountains and grey cathedrals among dark woods.

Well, we left Craigcrook on Tuesday with Dolly,* and Witchy,† and Dover,‡ and Peter, and dropped Aunt Boo§ at Queensferry, where I plucked a sweet-pea from your deserted garden, and came on well to Perth, where we walked on the *Inch*, and admired the fair *trampers* dancing in their tubs, on the edge of the twilight river, and the salmon fishers, with their red wizard looking lights, in their creaking cobles. Then had an excellent dinner, after which I aired myself on the lonely bridge, and saw the moon rise majestically behind the darkness of Kinnoull Hill; and then we all lounged at our quiet back windows, listening to the soft roar of the stream, and admiring the sweet effect of the moonlight on the long stretch of pale arches, with the sheety water beyond. After breakfast yesterday we drove out to Kinfauns, which is really a finer thing,

* A grand-daughter.
† A little dog.
‡ A carriage dog.
§ Mr. Innes's sister.

both for pictures and collections within, and scenery without, than I had recollected it. And on our return set off for this prettiest of all places, where we arrived before four o'clock, and soon enough to have a most delightful walk for two or three miles up the river, on the *Inver* side, which I have always thought the most beautiful, besides being free from the vexation of stupid guides and paltry locked gates, things which disturb my enjoyment of sweet places so much, that I rather think I shall not expose myself to their plague while I am here.

To-day we left Dolly to take her ease in her inn (and to improve her acquaintance with a very sociable kitten and a most solemn cat, which divide her affections between them), and drove up to Killiecrankie, where we got out of the carriage and walked down by the bridge and *the old* Blair road, which give you the only good views of that most magnificent ravine, and then drove back here again, through the grounds of Faskally, and, I am sorry to say, close by the windows of its fine new house. You know all these places, do not you? If you do, you will think this list of them a very dull piece of prose; and if you do not, you will not be much the wiser for reading it. I have not been at Killiecrankie for twenty years I believe.

I hope you continue to like Knockomie (how came it by so strange a name?) But you do not tell me how long you are to stay there, nor where you are to go when you leave it, nor how Innes has

been received in his kingdom,* nor whether he bears his faculties meekly, nor whether he has held any courts, or dismissed any substitutes, or convicted any culprits, nor whether you get any bribes to use your influence with him to prevent the course of justice, nor whether you are going to Kilravock, nor in what you feel changed when you compare yourself of yore, in your childish days with yourself of the day that is. Lady ———, I take it, is much more changed in the interval than you are. I am glad you like ———, for it is always happy and right to love where we can. But she will need mending, I suspect, before she is thoroughly amiable. For my part, I have no notion of any child being agreeable whose predominant impression is not that of its own insignificance except as an object of affection. And pray do not imbibe any of its mother's little *amertume;* entertaining as it sometimes is. It hardens the heart, and proceeds most commonly from a heart which disappointment has hardened already. I am afraid this is its true source, poor thing, with her; and though one cannot but pity and wish to see it dispelled by returning happiness, it must be owned not to be the most blessed of the fruits of affliction. May you, my dear child, have none of them to reap, even of a milder relish! We set out on our return to-morrow, and run to sleep at Kinross, and get early to Craigcrook on Sunday, and on Tuesday we go, for the rest of the week, to Ayrshire.

* Mr. Innes had recently been made Sheriff of Morayshire.

It is rather colder to-day, and I have a little clear fire gleaming opposite to the moon and the bright river. We have the Irish stories and a volume of Shakspere with us, but have not read a great deal. I am afraid your studies too will be interrupted by your rambling.

Though we have been living a most abstemious life, and always in the open air, I am as dyspeptic as a lazy alderman. Some sportsmen left young grouse for us this forenoon. Has Innes done any murder among those innocents? and now good night, and with love to all around you.—Believe me always, very affectionately yours.

153.—*To John Richardson, Esq.*

Hayleybury, Thursday, 15th October 1840.

My dear Richardson—Many thanks for your kind letter and invitation. Few things would give us more pleasure than coming to you at Kirklands. But our days are now so numbered that we must not let ourselves think of it for the present, &c.

Though we cannot meet, however, at Kirklands in October, we shall, I hope, before Christmas, in Edinburgh. When the leaves are all gone, and your darling trees have given over growing for the season, you will be able to tear yourself from your shades, and if Hopey and her sister can be persuaded to come sooner, we shall be most happy to see them without you.

We have had the most lovely ten days that I

ever remember, and I hope this second summer is not yet over. I have often heard of fine Octobers, but I do not think I ever saw one before, and we have enjoyed it thoroughly in this quiet, retired, and beautiful country, which hides in its recesses more fine woodland scenery, and even more lovely and magnificent residences than are dreamed of by those who merely pass along the highways. We returned only yesterday from a four days' run to Cambridge and Ely, where we were entertained with academical sumptuousness, and delighted with the palace-like colleges, and venerable and gigantic elms, to say nothing of the smooth sliding and silvery Cam, and its many Venetian-looking bridges, buttressed by vast umbrageous weeping willows. We are going to-day to St. Albans, to kneel at the shrine of Bacon, and see the statue over his grave. On Saturday we all go to London, and on Tuesday or Wednesday the Edinburgh party must take the rail to Lancaster; and so passes the glory of the world; and another season of enjoyment is struck off the small remnant that is left for us. No matter; we should not be troubled at these things, and though the thought of them does come more frequently to my mind, I am not sensible that they bring with them, or leave behind any gloom or apprehension. Your estimate of life, my dear friend, is the true one, and its best enjoyment I really believe is, when ambition has run its course, and anxiety for worldly success is at an end, provided always that there is tolerable health, and objects of love around us, &c.—Ever very affectionately yours.

154.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Edinburgh, 6th December 1840.

I have been down at the Duke's pier with Rutherfurd, and so have only time for a word to-day again. But I cannot deprive you of my *Sunday blessing*, and all its blessed effects. May it be realized and perpetuated on you, and all that are dear to you, for ever! I have not passed the whole day profanely either; for, after your mother and aunt Boo went to church, I read for a good hour in the life of Dr. Adam Clarke, with much interest and edification. Did I not tell you, that my poor hopeless Shetland poetess had at last found a refuge in the house of a pious lady at Hackney (I think, or Stoke Newington)? Well, this good lady, hearing from her *protegè* of my good deeds to her in former days, has indited a very primitive and sweet letter to me, and begged my acceptance of a copy of the life of the said Dr. A. Clarke, *who was her father;* which I received gratefully, and am perusing, I hope, not without profit—I am sure not without pleasure. He was not a man of powerful understanding, rather the reverse, and occasionally very dreamy and absurd; but of apostolical simplicity and purity, and with the zeal and devotedness, not only of an apostle, but a martyr. And he meets with so many good and kind people, and is himself so gentle and modest and candid, that it does one good to go through all his benevolent and enthusiastic twaddle; though a learned man also. And so God bless you always, my beloved

infant. Your mother is to write. But Tarley is perfect still, without blemish and without spot.—Ever yours.

155.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Wednesday, 16th December 1840

I have read Harriet's * first volume, and give in my adhesion to her Black Prince, with all my heart and soul. The book is really not only beautiful and touching, but *noble;* and I do not recollect when I have been more charmed, both by very sweet and eloquent writing, glowing description, and elevated as well as tender sentiments. To be sure, I do not at all believe that the worthy people (or any of them) ever spoke or acted as she has so gracefully represented them; and must confess, that, in all the striking scenes, I entirely forgot their complexion, and drove the notion of it from me as often as it recurred. But this does not at all diminish, but rather increases, the merit of her creations. Toussaint himself, I suppose, really was an extraordinary person; though I cannot believe that he actually was such a combination of Scipio and Cato, and Fenelon and Washington, as she seems to have made him out. Is the Henri Christophe of her story the royal correspondent of Wilberforce in 1818? *His* letters, though amiable, are twaddly enough. The book, however, is calculated to make all its readers better, and does great honour to the heart, as well as the talent and fancy, of the author. I would go a long way now to kiss the hem of her garment, or the

* Miss Martineau's Hour and The Man.

hand that delineated this glowing and lofty representation of purity and noble virtue. And she must not only be rescued from all debasing anxieties about her subsistence, but be placed in a station of affluence and honour, though I believe she truly cares for none of these things. It is sad to think that she suffers from ill health, and may even be verging to dissolution. God forbid. Tarley* is quite well. She has been going about all day, like the bride of *Thor*, with a great hammer in her hand, and sat with me over an hour, cradled in my great chair, and listening to my vivid descriptions of the lions, bears, tigers, and antelopes, whose effigies we turned over before us. She is very easily amused and engrossed with any occupation she takes to, and applies to it seriously and patiently for a long time together, just as you would do to a *code*.

156.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Saturday, 21st December 1840.

Bless your kind heart! I cannot tell you how much I was moved by your account of Whitey's report of the groups she saw in the hospital, and the thoughts they bred in you. Keep that kind, thoughtful Scotch heart always, and do not let *London*, or *Paley*, or *Dolly*, or anything, dissipate, or philosophise, or seduce you out of it. It is a *Scotch* heart I will maintain against all the world—meaning that such thoughts and feelings are far more common in Scotland than among the English, and

* His grand-daughter Charlotte.

sink deeper into the character. You will not find one English servant in a hundred who would have observed and felt what Whitey (who is not naturally contemplative or melting) reported of that visitation, though most of them might be prettier behaved, and more prompt with expressions of sympathy towards their mistresses. So much for my nationality, in which I count on your concurrence. This is the shortest day by the calendar, but has been half an hour longer than any we have seen for the last three weeks, owing to its sun, and strange brightness. It has been all day as clear as crystal, and with lovely skyish distances. I was reduced to admire its last glares through my lantern lights in the court; from which, after disposing of seventy-four wrangling motions, I did not get away till after two, and then I drove down with your mother to Granton Pier, where we walked about till the sun sank beyond Benledi, and then peeped into the Clarence steamer, which was hissing, and packing, and screaming at the quay, and really looked both splendid and inviting, with its spacious cabins, bright fires, and broad mirrors. For a moment I felt tempted to throw myself down on one of the sofas, and let myself be drifted off to the Thames! Would it not have been a nice lark, now, if we had popped in upon you on Monday evening, without bag or baggage, pence in our pockets, or shirts to our backs? And what a sensation, and hue and cry, all over Edinburgh, when we were missed! But I thought of my arrear of unsettled judgments, and so

skipped ashore again, and walked back to my post of duty. Thermometer was yesterday at 53. Remember that when the longest day comes, I think it has a fair chance to be colder. To-day it is not so high—only about 48; but still it is very fine. Your mother had a visit from Geo. Napier and ladies, and says he looks firmer and better, and talks of himself more cheerfully than she has known him do for years. Fullerton is off this afternoon to Carstairs, and Rutherfurd to-morrow to Airthrey for two days. He will see no more of our court, I take it, till next November, as he must be up with you before we meet again, and so will lose between £2000 and £3000, though salary and appeals will partly replace it. God bless you, my dearest dear.—Ever yours.

157.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Kendall, Wednesday Evening, 2d March 1841.

Here you see, and all safe and sound, Dolly rolling and tumbling on the carpet as fresh as a rose, and as nimble as a marmozet. She behaved rather better to-day, slept more, and certainly cried less; and when awake and not *ingurgitating*, on the whole very good company. Her principal plaything was my head, to be brushed and tickled with the hair of it, and then to clutch first at my ears, and then at my nose and eyes, and finally to thrust her whole hand into my mouth to be bitten, and then to begin all over again with roars of laughter. We have come on excellently to-day, with the help of four

horses to be sure, for the worst twenty odd miles of the way, and not stopping for luncheon. We got in half-past five, and might have gone on to Lancaster. But as we do not mean to take the night mail to-morrow, it is better for us all not to hurry; and having bespoken beds and dinner, it would not have been genteel to have run away from them; and an admirable dinner we have had in the Ancient King's Arms—with great oaken staircases—uneven floors—and very thin oak pannel—plaster-filled outer walls, but capital new furniture, and the brightest glass, linen, spoons, and china you ever saw. It is the same house in which I once slept about fifty years ago, with the whole company of an ancient stage-coach, which bedded its passengers three times on the way from Edinburgh to London, and called them up by the waiter at six o'clock in the morning to go five slow stages, and then have an hour to breakfast and wash. It is the only vestige I remember of those old ways, and I have not slept in the house since. It certainly looks gayer internally now. Langholm was actually covered with snow when we looked out in the morning, and I had misgivings about Shapfells. But the snow left us in a twinkling within four miles of our starting, and we saw no more of it till we got to the said Fells; and even there, there were but sprinklings and patches, and not a grain on the road, which was plated for our last twenty miles yesterday. This is a great Quaker town you know; but when I walked while they were getting dinner, I could not see a single

broad brim, or sad coloured coat; and on asking the waiter whether there were any Quakers left, he said, "O! dear, Sir, all the *nobility* and gentry of the place are Quakers; but they are all at home dining now, Sir, and you would only see mechanics and such like." This I think is edifying; only I should have wished to have shewn Dolly a right home-bred Quaker. We have only forty-five miles to-morrow, and though there are light shakings of hail through the calm air, I think we may reckon on housing at the Victoria, even earlier than to-day, and finding a line from you too—may we not?

God bless you, my love. But stop—before ending let me say that I wish you would let Dr. Ferguson see Dolly the day after she comes, and before you actually dismiss her milk cow. She sucks so much, that I have a little fear of the consequences of too sudden and peremptory an *ablactation;* and Ferguson is undoubtedly a first authority in such a question. If she was to put herself into a fever, or get some alarming disorder in stomach or bowels, you would never forgive yourself for having acted rashly, and her temperament is irritable enough to have some risk of this kind. Good advice is always cheap when it can be lawfully and surely bought.

158.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

21 Wimpole Street,
Saturday, 11th April 1841.

I begin to fear, from your not taking any notice

of me, that you found no amusement in my diary of dissipation, and are beginning to despise me, as one whose heart is set upon vanities. But pray, do not! for it was never more in the way of being sick of them, or had more longings after a more tranquil existence, and the soothing appliances of proved and reliable affection. Why, then, you will say, do I persist in those idle courses? and go out twice or three times (for there is a fashion of late, long, and loquacious, *breakfasts* come up, to complete the occupations of the day) every day I live? *Why*, do you say, my gentle monitress of the shore? Why, partly, because people ask me, and it is difficult to refuse; partly, because though it often wearies and disappoints me, it often amuses also; partly, because one is curious to see, and talk to persons of whom one has heard a great deal; partly, because I am more or less flattered by being noticed among *les célébrités;* and because I expect, and am sure indeed on many occasions, to learn things worth knowing in these circles, and sure, at all events, to get true impressions of the actual tone, temper, and habits, of the upper society; but chiefly, and in good earnest, because I think I am laying in stores to enlarge and diversify the recollections, conversations, and reflections of more sober and rational hours, and enabling myself to judge better of the value of the rumours and reputations that extend to the provinces, than anybody can do who has scarcely been out of them, or carries a provincial atmosphere with him even into London. It is from this rebound in-

deed, more than from the first impression, that I expect the chief pleasure of my present experiences, &c.—Yours very affectionately.

159.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

21 Wimpole Street,
Friday, 25th April 1841.
[*This letter misdated—probably* 1840.]

A thousand thanks for your innocent happy letter, and for your violets, which came with all the sweetness of the rocky shore on them. We have lots here from *Covent Garden*, which are sweet enough too, but they do not breathe like those of free waves, and sea-born breezes, and I have not the heart to send you anything so townish. I am glad, too, that you are going the circuit, and hope you will not lose heart about it, but go, even if Monday morning should be lowering and the babes come clucking under your wings. Inverary is so beautiful! and the best view of all is from the window of the old large inn; and perhaps you will go over to Strachur too, and go up to Glenbranta, high up, if you please, a mile or more above the house, and turning to the right hand. and not to the left.

It is sweet weather still here, and all the young woods, and even the old horse-chesnuts have started into leaf, and the nightingales into song, as if at a word of command. And yet we are dying for rain, and should be most thankful for what I doubt not you will have to spare in that way before your

western ramble is completed. The horses riding over the turf in the park send up clouds of dust from their heels, as if from an unwatered road, and all the gardens are like Arabian deserts. There is no memory of such a season, or of an April without showers. And now will you have more *journal?* It is very kind in you to say that it amuses you. But if it does, I am sure I should be very shabby if I grudged you an amusement which costs me so little. Where were we at? Had I told you of our Good Friday dinner, at *home*, with Lords Denman and Monteagle, and Wrightson (a school-fellow of Empson's), and W.'s wife, and Charlotte's brother-in-law Colden from America? and how we were very natural and social, and passed a long evening very pleasantly? On Saturday we were all at Macaulay's with the French minister, Rogers, Hallam, Mount S. Elphinstone, Austin, &c. Sunday I had a sweet long ramble with Charley in Regent's Park, and sat in gentle discourse with her for more than an hour on those upland seats which look over to Highgate and Hampstead, and are so fresh and airy. I dined afterwards at Holland House with rather a large party.

I sat by C. Buller and Lady S. and Lord Holland and T. D. next; and I rather think, from the look of the rest of the party, that we had the best of it. Indeed it is always the best luck to be near Lord Holland; and I never saw him more agreeable. Monday I had a nice quiet family party with the Mintos at the Admiralty. They are always so gay

and natural. And I was so glad to see Lady Mary again, who was a sort of love of mine before her marriage, or rather before their going abroad in 1834; since which time I have never seen her. She is altered in appearance, having in fact been very unwell; but has retained the same gentle, unselfish, thoughtful cheerfulness, which I used to think so charming. She goes to Florence with her husband in the course of next month. Tuesday we all drove down to see the humours of a Greenwich fair, which I had not seen for more than twenty years; and some of the rest not at all. It was a sweet day; and the walk in the park, and under the porticos and terraces of that palatial hospital, was the best of it. The groups of children, chasing apples and oranges down the green slopes under these grand chesnuts, together with the odd dry outbreaks of hot gravel, and the broad gleamy river, studded with all sorts of vessels, mixed with the domes and pillars of the building, and the pinnacles of the Observatory, brought me strongly in mind of the Panorama of Benares and the Ganges, which I had seen, with great admiration, the day before. But I shall never get on, if I go into descriptions. I dined afterwards at Sergeant Talfourd's, &c.

Wednesday we all drove out to Holland House, and had a sweet walk under the cedars and in the garden, where we listened in vain for the nightingales; though both Lord H. and Allen challenged them to answer, by diverse fat and asthmatical whistles. We then dined at Rogers', with Lady C. Lindsay,

Sydney Smith, Mount S. Elphinstone, D. Dundas, and two more good men. The talk was more placid and gentle than usual; owing, as I maintained, to the soft darkness of the room, which was only lighted by the reflection of shaded lamps, stuck against the pictures; and I liked it better than the eternal snap and flash of ——, and the terse studied aphorisms of ——. Yesterday I paid a long round of *suburban* visits,— Lord Dillon, Mrs. Austin, Lady Callcot, and the Macleods,—*on foot*, and came home delightfully hot and tired. Then we all drove, through a golden afternoon, to dine with the Lansdownes at Richmond. They have a most beautiful villa, just below the Star and Garter, and commanding the same view, with a lovely sloping garden quite down to the water, full of roses and nightingales, and all sorts of fragrant shrubs. . . . . .

We came home in the sweetest starlight, which we saw clearly reflected in the sheety Thames, which made me think of your broader and more pellucid views at the Ferry. To-day the ther. is 71, and the sky still without a cloud. We dine at Stephen's, the author of that paper about enthusiasm which I advised you to read, but scarcely hope you will like. To say truth, I cannot find anybody to like it but myself. But it certainly suits my *idiosyncrasy* (what do you think *that* is now?) singularly; and I am sure it is more like Plato, both in its lofty mysticism, and its sweet and elegant style, than anything of modern date. Perhaps Innes may read it on this recommendation: the latter half is by far the best. And now

God bless you! I have brought up my sad confessions once more to the ignorant present time, and I daresay you are tired of them. In another week my round of folly will be completed, and you shall have the poor sequel, with a sketch of my Hayleybury retreat, waiting for you on your return, if you do not instruct me where I could forward it to you on your progress. Do you encounter the bugs and gas of a Glasgow hotel? I should think not, and then you will be home sooner. Write me at all events from Inverary. —Ever affectionately yours.

160.—*To Lord Cockburn.*

8 Hind Street, 4th May 1841.

My dear C.—I am further gone than ever in dissipation, and its concomitant vices—of laziness, neglect of all social duties, and utter want of leisure for the very necessities of existence; so that I cannot afford to give even you the merest outline of a chronicle, such as I used to furnish in the days of my (comparative) innocence, of the cause and progress of this scandalous dissipation. It may be enough, however, to entitle me to the prayers of all just men, to know that I dine out every day, in promiscuous societies of idle men and women. After breakfast in similar assemblies, and generally during the evening with some devil's vespers of a still more crowded, noisy, and questionable description. In this career, too, I labour under the additional scandal of being alone of my house; the three

Charlottes* never going forth unless on works of necessity or mercy, and Empson only countenancing me in the most sober and decorous of my outgoings. The houses where I have been oftenest are those of the Widow Holland, the Canon Sydney, the girl Berrys, the poet Samuel, and a few others. However, I have been hospitably entertained, and that more than once, by the Lord Chief Justice, and various others of her Majesty's judges, Rolfe, Coltman, Alderson, and Parke. Moreover, I have assisted at a grand ball at the Lord Chancellor's; been twice invited by the Master of Rolls, as well as by the learned the Attorney-General. I have repeatedly met most of the cabinet, and enleavoured, though I cannot say successfully, to enlighten their sad ignorance of the state and rights of our church. On the whole, I have had pleasant parties, and been most kindly received, by men, women, and children. I have seen a great deal of the Listers and their gay bright-hearted Clarendon allies, and though I have renewed my vows to my sweet Mary ———, have fallen dangerously in love with that beautiful Mrs. ———, who was joint sponsor with me last year for one of Dr. Holland's babes, and the Rev. Mr. Milman, and a few others. I have been engaged every day but one since I came up, and yet regret to have been obliged to decline invitations to the Sutherlands, Somersets, Carlisles, Greys, and Melbournes, to say nothing of Miss Burdett Coutts and her father. To make amends, how-

* His wife, daughter, and grandchild.

ever, I have seen a good deal of Tommy Moore, who is luckily here on a visit like my own; of Hallam, who has returned in very good spirits, after eight months' rustication; of Little ———, who is altogether as lively and less brusque and dogmatical than formerly; and, above all, of Charles Dickens, with whom I have struck up what I mean to be an eternal and intimate friendship. He lives very near us here, and I often run over and sit an hour *tête à tête*, or take a long walk in the park with him—the only way really to know or be known by either man or woman. Taken in this way I think him very amiable and agreeable. In mixed company, where he is now much sought after as a lion, he is rather reserved, &c. He has dined here (for Charlotte has taken to giving quiet parties), and we with him, at rather too sumptuous a dinner for a man with a family, and only beginning to be rich, though selling 44,000 copies of his weekly issues, &c. I have also repeatedly met Taylor (Philip Von Artefelde). I have also dined with Talfourd, and had him here with us. Have often visited my mystical friends the Carlisles; and made a pilgrimage the other day to the new abode of old George Thomson,* whom I found marvellously entire, though affecting to regret his too late transplantation from Edinburgh. I need not say that I often see Richardson and his two nice daughters; and the Mintos, and all my old friends.

Is it egotism or what that makes me tire you

* The correspondent of Burns.

with this idle story of my own poor experience, without saying a word of the great public crisis, in the very midst of which I am writing? If it were more pleasant or hopeful, I suppose, I should not so shrink from it. But I have no pleasure in thinking of it; and having little to tell that is not known to everybody, am not much inclined to speak. The days of the Whig Government are numbered; and those of Tory domination about to be resumed, &c.

It is the sweetest weather in the world; thermometer all last week, with the exception of one morning, about seventy; with such fresh breezes and silvery showers, and such a flush of blossom and foliage, that when I sat this morning in a lonely part of Kensington Garden, and gazed on the unsunned freshness of the groves around me, and listened to the shrilling larks in the sky above, and saw the pearl coloured clouds reflected in the clear sheety waters at my feet, I wondered how a thinking and feeling man should stoop to care about changes of ministers or such paltry matters, &c.

161.—*To Mrs. C. Innes.*

Hayleybury, Saturday, 9th May 1841.

My dear Mrs. Innes—Though we are but twenty miles from London, and go back to it on Monday, I feel as if I had not seen anything of it for ages, and look back already on my late course of dissipation there as an old recollection, or some dream and imagination, of long past days. We are so rural

and quiet here, that there can be no greater contrast. This house is in a cluster of tall shrubs and young trees, with a little bit of smooth lawn sloping to a bright pond, in which old weeping willows are dipping their hair, and rows of young pear trees admiring their blooming faces. Indeed, there never was such a flash of shadowing high hanging flowers as we have around us; and almost all, as it happens, of that pure, silvery, snowy, bridal tint; and we live, like Campbell's sweet Gertrude, "as if beneath a galaxy of overhanging sweets, with blossoms white." There are young horse-chesnuts with flowers half a yard long, fresh, full-clustered, white lilacs, tall Guelder roses, broad spreading pear and cherry trees, low thickets of blooming sloe, and crowds of juicy-looking detached thorns, quite covered with their fragrant May flowers, half open, like ivory fillagree, and half shut like Indian pearls, and all so fresh and dewy since the milky showers of yesterday; and resounding with nightingales, and thrushes, and sky-larks, shrilling high up, overhead, among the dazzling slow sailing clouds. Not to be named, I know and feel as much as you can do, with your Trosachs, and Loch Lomonds, and Inverarys; but very sweet, and vernal, and soothing, and fit enough to efface all recollections of hot, swarming, whirling, and bustling London from all good minds.

Well, but you do not know that I have had (and have still in a manner) a sort of influenza, which has kept me from doing little more than dawdling about the doors, and may have helped to put all thoughts

of my late doings out of my head. It came on two days before I left town with a slight *trachea*, but was considerate enough not to plague me with any feverish feelings till I had fairly got through all my gay engagements, and that very day I wrote last to you, it was beginning to tingle in my veins. It has been but light however, and really has not much interfered with my enjoyment of this sweet season and soft retreat, and innocent domestic life, though I thought it right to have the *college doctor* to wonder at my admirable treatment of myself, and to sanction my sal. vols. and antimonials; and he and I agreed in consultation this morning, that we have effectually turned the flank of the enemy, and that he has begun his retreat. So we still hold our purpose of going to town on Monday, and getting on the rail on Wednesday morning. If we do not, I shall probably write to you again. I have had great comfort in reading over your Inverary letter again, partly from the freshness with which it brings back those long loved mountain bays and promontories, sheety waters, and fragrant birch woods to my imagination, but chiefly for the picture of your own pure, simple, light-hearted enjoyment. You know how prompt a sympathy I have with happiness in almost all its varieties. But yours is of a kind to attract me beyond all others, breathing, as it does, the sweet spirit of youth, and innocence, and natural taste, and harmony, with the imperishable loveliness of nature. It is the share and relish for this which is still left me, which

makes me in some things so much younger than my years; but I am all the better for having it reflected upon me from the hearts of the really young, and it is an infinite consolation to me to think that you are so young, that I shall always be able to have it bright and undimmed from yours while I can feel or care for anything.

And now, will you have the close of my town journal? It is an old story now, and I have, luckily I believe, forgotten all but the outlines. But here are the fragments:—Friday, 24th—At Stephen's (I think I did not mention that before) with Macaulay and Mounteagle—(O! but I think I remember that I *did* tell you of that); and how Macaulay exceeded his ordinary excess in talk, and how I could scarcely keep him from pure soliloquy, and how Lord M. fell fairly asleep, and our Platonic host himself *nodded* his applause. But no matter—that was the truth of it, whether told for the first or second time. Saturday—I am sure I did not chronicle before, we were at Lord Denman's with Sydney Smith, Rogers, the Milmans, and that beautiful Mrs. D——, whom I had not seen for years, &c. We went in the evening (at least I did) to Ba——'s great assembly, where I was set upon by Lady ———, and contrived very cleverly to introduce her to Talfourd, and to leave them together, and then fell into the clutches of that crazy, chattering Lady ———, and was only rescued by the kind recognition of poor Lady ———, who is quite paralytic, and is wheeled through the room in a chair,

but a very sweet-mannered, elegant, and gracious creature still. I had talk with various learned persons, and walked home in the cool starlight. On Sunday, I was asked to be *en famille* at Holland House, but found sixteen people—foreign ambassadors, and everybody; but no ladies but Lady ———, who is always agreeable. Lord H. was full of good talk, and trusted me home with his six days' journal of the conversation at his house in 1814, made as an experiment of what could be done in rivalry of Boswell's Johnson. It is very entertaining, and contains some capital specimens of Grattan, Parr, Frere, Windham, and Erskine; but I quite agree with him that it would not have been fair to continue it. Monday—We had a party at home—the Listers, Stephens, Northamptons, and Macleods. It was very hot, but came off perfectly, everybody being in good humour. Charley looking very nice, and getting on charmingly, with Mr. Elphinstone on one side, and Lord Northampton on the other, with both of whom she is at ease. Tuesday—The two Charlottes and I were at Holland House again (Empson being obliged to be at College), and again a large party. I had the honour of sitting between Lord Melbourne and Lord Duncannon, with Lord H. but one off, so we had the best of the talk. My lady being between the French and the Prussian ambassadors, and calling often in vain for our assistance on one side, and Lord John Russell on the other, who was busy with C. Buller. The Charlottes were delighted with Lord H., who had them both by him,

and talked to them all the time of dinner with so much gaiety and good humour. My lady they thought very amusing after dinner, and full of kindness to them. I had some good talk with Guizot after coffee, and a little about Dr. Alison and our Scotch poor with Lord John, and came home late. Wednesday—We were all with Mr. Justice and Lady Coltman, where we had Baron Maule, the Attorney, and Lady S., and, in short, rather a professional party, with the exception of F. Lewis, and Jo. Romilly, and Lady ———, who writes books. Lady C. is very agreeable, though a zealous Unitarian, and I rather think the only truly agreeable person I know of that persuasion. Thursday—A party again at home, and mostly ladies. The Denmans, Richardsons, Campbells, &c., with Baron Rolfe, and others. It was very hot again, and there were people in the evening. Cracrofts, Calverts, and others you do not know, and I have not time to describe. Friday—I did a great deal of work—drove out to the new Horticultural Gardens at Chiswick, and walked about among its blossoms an hour—came home in an open carriage (and got my trachea), then at six went to stand sponsor to Mrs. Holland's last baby, along with Lady Park, and my pretty Mrs. ———. Sydney officiated, and was somehow so much moved that he could scarcely get through, and was obliged to finish the ceremony sitting. I then hurried off to dinner with the Campbells at Paddington, where we had the Bishop of Llandaff and the Dean of Carlisle, invited on pur-

pose to meet *me*. So you see in what esteem my orthodoxy is held among the sages of the south. But not to end the day too sanctimoniously, Empson carried me at night to a grand city *ball*, in Draper's Hall; not a public ball, however, but a rich friend of his lives in the adjoining house, and got leave to light the antique premises for his party. The rooms are very grand and imposing, but being finished with dark carved oak, and mostly carpeted with ancient Turkey, looked rather sombre for a ball. However, there were 300 people, and a grand supper, from which, however, we ran away. It is one symptom of the enormous wealth of this place, that a quiet plain man, who has no pretensions to fashion or display, should thus spend £500 on one night's dull gaiety. Saturday—We breakfasted in Regent's Park with Miss Rogers—a most lovely morning, where we had the poet, C. Murray (the hero of the Pawnees), the Milmans, and Sir C. and Lady Bell. Mrs. ——— was looking very pretty, and in her nice bright pale green gown, and hanging flowers, looked like a lily of the valley just pushing out of its delicate sheath We drove afterwards and saw Joanna Baillie at Hampstead, and had another party at dinner (I agree with you in the extravagance and folly of it) *at home*. The Macaulays, and Trevyllians, Rogers, Austins, Palgraves. Sunday—We went early to Bushy Park and Hampton Court—a most splendid day, though the east wind rather sharp for my poor *trachea*. We walked about (too long for its good), the horse-chesnuts all in flower,

but the leaves scarcely fully unfurled. The Hampton Court Gardens are really beautiful, and so gay with well-dressed, moral-looking, happy people. Empson and I then went to dine with W. Murray* at the Temple, where we had excellent turtle and champagne—Lord Denman, Mt. Elphinstone, and Sir Geo. Philips—only less wine than usual, and a long talk after coffee, with Elphinstone especially, till my feet got cold, and the *trachea* took half my voice away, when we came home inglorious, in a cab. Monday—I went to the exhibitions, and dined at ——— ——— with a great *Yorkshire* party—Lord Tyrconnel and spouse, Lady F. Grahame, some Beresfords, a Mrs. Somebody who sat by me, and took me all the time of dinner for *the bishop of Ripon*, in spite of my brown coat and white waistcoat, and laughed like a hyæna when she found out the mistake. The bishop's wife was sitting opposite, but he was detained in the Lords, and did not come till dinner was over. I thought him the most agreeable bishop I ever saw, and very good looking, and I hope he will come to shew himself to you in Scotland. We had my old friends, Sir George Cayley and Miss too, and Lady Worsley and her daughter in the evening. I like all the Cayleys. I called to bid the Berrys farewell on my way home, but found they had gone to Richmond for the season that morning; so I came home, and here at last ends the history of my five weeks' London experiences, more faithfully and largely recited than such things

* William Murray, Esq. of Henderland.

ever were before, or ever will, or deserve to be, recited again. Next morning I had your letter, and wrote to you, and came down here with a great deal of languid fever about me. But we drove through the sweet shades of Pansanger on Wednesday, and sat under their grand oak. We have been altogether and delightfully alone ever since, and, in spite of some little languor, I have enjoyed it thoroughly. The country round is wavy and woody, very green, and bounded by a ridge of hills, though low enough to be all cultivated and wooded. The streams clear, for England, running over beds of green flags or grass, and pretty rapid. And now God bless you. I am sure I have been a good correspondent—better perhaps than you could bargain for again, but no matter. I hope you went to Strachur, and up by Loch Eck, and Ardentinny, and that you are at home now, and as happy as when you were wandering. With kindest love to all your house from all ours here. If I were in town I would send you a stamped cover, but they have not yet reached these distant parts.—Ever affectionately yours.

162.—*To John Richardson, Esq.*

E. I. College, Monday, 1st November 1841.

My dear Richardson—I really cannot *wish you joy* of your impending loss of such a daughter as my gentle, sensible, dutiful, and cheerful Hopey,* and I do not know that I can even wish *her* joy of such

* Who was going to be married to Henry Reeve, Esq.

a separation. Yet I feel assured that there will be joy, lasting and growing for you all, and that in no long time we shall wonder that anybody thought of murmuring at so happy a dispensation. In the meantime, however, the only person I can candidly congratulate is Mr. Reeve, whom I think far better entitled to the name of "the fortunate youth" than any to whom it has ever been applied. I have scarcely the honour of his acquaintance (though if I live I hope to have), but I perfectly remember of meeting him at dinner at your house, and being struck with his vivacity and talent, and also of breaking in upon him in a morning call on Hopey and her sister, when certain vague suspicions and envyings did pass across my imagination. Do tell my dear Hopey how earnestly I wish and pray for her happiness, and that I hope she will not entirely cut me now that she is to become the centre of a separate circle, &c.—Ever affectionately yours.

163.—*To Mrs. Rutherfurd.*

Torquay, Friday Evening, 29th April 1842.

My very dear Sophia—I had actually begun a letter of consolation to you, in your widowed solitude of Colme Street or Craigie Hall, when I heard from Harriet Brown that you had taken the wings of the morning, and flown away to your native bowers in the far west; so I thought you would need no immediate consolation, and might hold my tediousness too cheap. But as I am coming home at last, after

a weary absence of nine long months, I must bring myself a little to your recollection, that we may not meet as absolute strangers, and also that you may be prepared for some of the unhappy changes I am afraid you will find in me. In my heart, and my love to you, I think you will find none; and it is through these that I hope to retain my identity. But you will find me some years *older* than when we parted; with whiter hair, a slower and more infirm step, "most weak hams," as the satirical scene has it,—a weaker voice, and a greater inability to eat, drink, or sleep; so that, though I am not yet "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans breath, sans everything," and do not drop much amber or plumtree gum from my eyelids, —I am verging, with unreasonable celerity, to decay, and am already in a condition which will require all the indulgence I now bespeak of you. So you must be a good girl, and play the *Nelly* to me, now and then, keeping me out of scrapes, and cheering my failing spirit with the spectacle of your brightness, and sustaining it by the strength of your affection; and this you do promise and engage, as God shall bless and assist you? To be sure you do, and there is no more to be said about it.

Were you ever here at Torquay? A most beautiful place I think it is, and lovely both at sea and on shore; though the east wind has found us out even here, and blown upon us indeed ever since we fled so far before it. But it has blown, it must be confessed, with a gentleness unknown to the vernal *Eurus* of Edinburgh, or even of London, and through a sky,

and over a sea, of the most dazzling and unsullied blue, and barely stirring the tender green leaves, and crimson apple blossoms, which, in spite of its warnings, are flushing all over the country. We tired of the racket of the hotels after two days' trial, and were lucky enough then to find very nice lodgings in a detached house, about a mile beyond the town, which stands in a sort of lawn, immediately over the beach, and in the centre of a beautiful bay, bounded by two headlands of dark-red caverned rock, not a quarter of a mile asunder; against which the great waves come bursting and thundering all day long, and then waste themselves, in long lines of silver, on the smooth sands at our feet. You have no idea how much I have enjoyed the perfect solitude and profound repose of this situation, with the lovely moonlight, and eternal brightness, with which it has been cheered for the last ten days. To give my poor trachea all the chances that are left it, we shall linger here till Monday (2d), and then start for Hayleybury, where, however, we shall stay but a very few days; and after stopping but two days in town, for a farewell consultation of my doctors, embark on the rail for Lancaster, in time to reach Edinburgh on the 13th or 14th.

You will be back too, about that time, will you not? and I shall see you soon after my arrival. I have misgivings about being able to resume my work, after all. But the final experiment *must* now be tried, and I feel that I shall not be at all cast down by its failure. I am sure that there can be no failure in

the other experiment, of returning to the society of the friends on whose kindness I rely; and that makes everything else indifferent. I can tell you nothing of your truant husband. He has never had the grace to write to me, though I heard from Lady Theresa the other day, that he had appeared before her in great health and spirits. He would probably tell you of Lister himself, for whom I cannot help having great apprehensions; and I can see that, with all her buoyancy of hope and spirits, she is not without deep anxiety.

We know nobody here but a brother of Macaulay's who married a very sweet and beautiful daughter of Lord Denman's last December, and has been honeymooning with her here ever since. He has the robust spirits, and stout and kind heart of his brother, though without any of his fine understanding, and, indeed, is chiefly remarkable *for being alive*, after a ten years' residence at Sierra Leone. However, they are very easy people to live with, and, besides the constant spectacle of happiness with which they delight me, have carried us to all their lover's walks, and whispering places in the ocean caves, and we have driven together to Dartmouth and Dawlish, and laid in the germs of many pleasant recollections. I sometimes think that I am rather better too, since I have come to these milder regions; and when I run out as I generally do ("on my printless feet") to "chase the ebbing Neptune, and to fly him when he comes back," for a few minutes before breakfast, and then come back to the airy quietude

of our octagon drawing-room, with its two sunny windows, letting in silent stripes of green light through its venetians, and the shady one wide open, I think I should like to stay here always, and fade gently away, with the last flowers of autumn. But things will be as they are appointed; and having all my life been contented to move passively with the quiet current, which *will* bear us all on its destined course, whether we struggle against it or not, I do not think of any feeble movements to modify its direction in these last days of the voyage; and so, God bless and keep you always, my very dear Sophia.

If you write, immediately on receiving this, to E. I. College, near Hertford, I shall get your letter before starting. If not, I shall hope to come to the contact of your *written* or *living* hand, immediately on my arrival at Edinburgh. C. sends her best love, and our little Scottish girl also, whom we carry back with us to Edinburgh.—Ever most affectionately yours.

164.—*To Andrew Rutherfurd, Esq.*

Edinburgh, Saturday, 11th July 1842.

My dear R.—A word only to thank you for your kind letters, before I go to keep tryst with Cockburn on the green at Craigcrook. This is the first fair Saturday we have had this month, and the last of our sessional *Saturnalia*. We shall have Charley back, however, before the next, and you and Sophia

may I not hope before one or two more? But, oh dear, *volvuntur anni!* You do not care, for there are many coming to you before your score (of three score and ten) is up. But when the current is visibly almost out, and when every whirl of the Fates' swift spindle shews the dark wood through the few remaining coils of grizzly wool, the reflection is not so pleasant. It does not oppress me much, however, though it comes oftener than it used to do. But this is not Saturnalian language, and I do not know how I fell into it. "Talk not of fate; ah—change the theme: talk of odours, talk of wine;" and so we shall—at dinner, and with you too when you come to dine with us.

We have not had a club since you went; and if you do not come back soon, that venerable institution will be not sleeping, but dead.

165.—*To Mr. Empson.*

[It is not dated, and hence is misplaced here; but it was written early in 1840, some time prior to the passing of the 3d and 4th of Victoria, chapter 9.]

Sic cogitavit.—F. J.

I suppose you admit that *there is privilege*, as to some things, and that we have now nothing to do with the question whether *there ought to be?* whether the rights and powers of House of Commons or Lords, or of legislature itself, *should be* subordinated, as in America, to the judiciary, or be, to some extent, independent? And yet there is a hankering after the

American rule, and a constant raising of the question of *what ought to be* in all the anti-privilege argument.

But, *assuming* that there is privilege within certain limits, the question really comes to be, *who* is to judge of these limits? *who* to determine when they have been exceeded?—to fix, in short, the distinction between *the use and the abuse?*

Now, considering either the *actual origin* of privilege, or *the nature* of that sense of public advantage or *quasi* necessity, which has led to its *assumption*, I have always thought that the power (and the right) of judging to what cases it should apply, *can only* be in the body which possesses it. It is easy to say that if this be so, *anything* may be declared a breach of privilege, and *everything* left to the mercy of an irresponsible despotism, and to state extreme cases in which startling acts of injustice and cruelty may have actually been perpetrated under this principle. But this is poor, and I cannot but think very palpable, nonsense.

Is it not answered at once, and quite as sufficiently as it deserves, by directing the same *twaddle* against the courts of law? If *they* are always to judge what is within privilege, may they not at any time determine that there is *nothing* within it? If by leaving the question to the H. of C. *everything* may be brought within privilege, is it not equally clear that, by leaving it to the courts of law, all privilege may be entirely annihilated?

The short of it is, that while men are but men, we must be at the mercy of a fallible and irrespon-

sible despotism at last; and if I had to choose, as in an open question, I should not hesitate to say that I would far rather have the House of Commons for my despot than the courts of law.

No reasoning is so puerile as that from extreme (or morally *impossible*) cases. They may be of use sometimes to test an abstract proposition of law; but, as make weights in a *practical* question, they are absolutely contemptible. I do not think it makes much difference whether they are purely imaginary, or borrowed from antiquated precedents, and either way they may always be retorted on those who adduce them. Are there no cases of atrocious oppression and injustice in the decisions of those courts of law to whose infallibility you would have recourse from the *privileged* oppressions of Parliament? Are there no such cases in the acts of the *legislature itself*, which we must all admit to be without remedy? Nay, will any man tell me that there is the smallest chance of any *such* oppression being attempted by the present H. of C., as has been over and over again inflicted by the whole legislative body?

Then, again, as to the quibble, that, in the exercise of privilege the H. of C. is at once party and judge,—I say, that in all cases of disputed *jurisdiction* or contempt (which is precisely the case here), the court is always both party and judge; and that courts of law have much more of the *esprit du corps*—the unfair leaning to their order—than any other bodies whatever.

I confess, too, that I can see no ground on which

the courts have recently overruled the privilege of the H. of C., that might not justify their overruling it, in the cases in which it has been held best established, and has not yet been questioned. Take the privilege, for example, of members not being answerable, anywhere, for words spoken in Parliament. It is possible that such words may not only be ruinously defamatory, but capable of being clearly proved to have been dictated by the basest and most abominable personal malice. Why, then, should not the Court of Queen's Bench, on the grounds lately asserted, allow an action for damages on offer of such proof? The case of an alleged defamation being *published* by the deliberate order and authority of the whole House, seems to me a *far stronger* case for the assertion (or allowance) of privilege, than that of a spiteful individual sheltering himself under that shield; and so, in all the other *admitted* cases under which it would be easy enough to *imagine* the most infamous injustice.

If it be said that there is *established usage* and precedent for such cases, but none for those recently brought forward, I answer that there is no such series of precedents as would justify these admitted and established cases, on the ground of authority and prescription, without justifying at the same time a great number of other cases, which no one now pretends to justify; that, in point of fact, there are more precedents for a confessedly unjustifiable exercise of privilege than for that which is now *universally* allowed to be just and necessary, and that these

established cases have accordingly been so established, *not* on the footing of long usage, but on the general (*not judicial*) recognition of the H. of C. having rightly adjudged them to be *necessary* for the due performance of their all-important functions and duties.

It is to this necessity accordingly, and to their own enlightened and conscientious sense of it, that the House of Commons has always referred its assertion of privilege, either in former or recent times; and if, in their improved and cautious application of *the principle*, they have seen cause to abandon and recede from many precedents to be found on their records, why or how should they be restrained from now extending it to any new and emerging cases, (if any such actually occur), while they feel and are convinced that it is at least as applicable as to any to which it had been previously applied?

If it be admitted then (and I do not see how it can be denied) that, independent altogether, either of *precise* precedent, or near analogy, it is right and fit that privilege should exist (always meaning by that, not merely the right of adjudging and ordering, in the first instance, but the *absolute exclusion of all interference, review, or control*) whenever it is necessary for the right performance of the highest of all public functions, as those of legislation; then the only question is, whether *the right of judging of this necessity* should (or must) be in the respective legislative bodies themselves, or in the courts of common law? To my mind there can be but one answer.

In the first place, this right has, in point of fact, *always been assumed and exercised*, and in a vast majority of cases, without challenge, by these bodies, on their own proper authority; and all their existing and admitted privileges have accordingly grown up and been established upon this assumption of inherent right; and *never* in any case on the strength of any grant or recognition of them in any other quarter. Then, though the courts have occasionally brought them into question, and refused to recognise them, I believe there is no instance in which their right to do so has been acknowledged by these bodies. For, though I am aware that there are one or two (at most) in which, after such disallowance by the courts, they have abstained from proceeding against the offenders—yet I believe it will be found that this was always done on an avowed change of their own opinions as to the necessity of such proceedings, and not on any deference or submission to the judicial authority. But if all existing privilege has thus originated in assumption alone, why should any other title be now required? or is it not *ridiculous* to pretend that under the present constitution of the House of Commons, and the growing power of public opinion, there can be any serious dangers from its exercise?

But if the matter were open for reasoning, can anybody doubt that, when the question is, whether an occasion has actually arisen in which the assertion of privilege is necessary to the right and effectual exercise of the legislative functions, the only body that ever can be competent to decide on it, must be

that in which the occasion has so arisen? who alone can be aware of the obstructions that might otherwise impede them; and who must not only know all about it far better than any other can ever be made to know, but must often have their best and safest motives suggested by that *feeling* and *conscientia* of their position and embarrassment, which no proof or explanation can ever make intelligible to another? that other especially being a body accustomed only to the application of technical and inflexible rules, and of whom a great part have probably had no experience of the working, or *requisites*, of preparatory legislation? I must add, too, a body which has almost always been hostile to popular rights, and disposed to be obsequious to authority, and of whose interference with constitutional questions it is right therefore to be jealous. The House of Commons has no doubt often used its privilege in subservience to aristocratic or regal propensities; yet not so uniformly or basely as the courts of law; and though both are improved in this respect, the improvement undoubtedly is far greater (especially since the Reform Bill) in the House of Commons than in the courts.

As to ——'s argument as to the *insufficiency* of the remedy by privilege—as the House of Commons can only imprison during its session, and no sentence or execution can proceed in recess, I can only say, that it has no bearing whatever on *the merits* of the question, and is well enough answered by suggesting, that imprisonment during a long session is no very

light infliction, and that the fear of it must operate (as we have seen it operate) to deter many from beginning, or persisting in, opposition to the resolutions of the House. The most remarkable thing about that argument, however, is the contrast it presents to the exaggerated views which have been taken of the terrible consequences of these occasional assertions of privilege, and the ridicule, indeed, which it throws on their fantastic alarms. It is certainly edifying to see one leading assailant of this claim maintaining that, if not instantly crushed, it will lay the property and constitution of the country at the feet of a many-headed despot; and another holding it up to contempt, as a puny demonstration of impotent anger, which can give no real distinction to what it affects to repress.

Upon these views generally, you will at once see that I hold all reference to past instances of admitted abuse as of no account whatever in the argument; and still less, of course, any objection to the wisdom, propriety, or even consistency, of any recent resolution that a case *had* occurred for the assertion of privilege. The issue in all such cases being, whether such assertion was, or was not, necessary (or highly expedient) in each particular case, for the explication and due performance of legislative duties, a difference of opinion, on the part of a present minority (or of a vast majority of an after generation), can no more bring into question the right of the general body to decide, and act upon its decision, in the case of the H. of C., than in any other case of doubtful or erro-

neous decision. The legislature has often enough passed absurd and sanguinary statutes; courts of law (including the House of Lords) have still oftener pronounced arbitrary and foolish and corrupt judgments, and no doubt have made oppressive and vindictive commitments for alleged contempt. But no one, I suppose, has ever maintained, that the citation of such instances afforded any argument against the existence of the legislative and judicial powers in these several bodies, or had the slightest relevancy indeed in such an argument.

But though *I* should, as a judge, hold the solemn assertion of privilege by the House of Commons as sufficient to *stop* all courts from thwarting or interfering with it, I cannot disguise from myself that many excellent persons, as well as almost all *other* judges, do in fact think differently;—and that a question of *jurisdiction* being once raised, on which they are bound to decide, it is difficult to say that they are not entitled to give out and maintain their conscientious decision, although its enforcement may conflict directly with the orders of one of the Houses of Parliament. *Both* parties, in short, as in all cases of disputed jurisdiction, may not only be right *in foro poli*, but be under an indispensable obligation to enforce their conflicting decisions. You in England may have generally been able to get out of the difficulty by appeal to the Lords. But with us in Scotland it is truly as inextricable in this contest about privilege—as in the case of conflict between the Session and Justiciary, and in the late memorable

lutte between Session and General Assembly;—both Justiciary and Assembly being absolutely final, and admitting of no appeal to any other tribunal. In many respects, indeed, these cases are strikingly parallel to the present; for as there is no review of the decisions of the Commons by appeal to Lords, and as, in point of fact, these conflicts upon privilege have often been *with the Lords themselves*, it is obviously quite absurd to suppose that they either ever would, or *ought* ever, to recognize any higher jurisdiction in the appellate law court, than in those lower ones with which their conflict may have begun. It may be doubted whether it was wise even to plead to the *jurisdiction* in these courts; but of course they never could plead to anything else, nor without a full disclamation of any obligation to stand by the decision.

The only remedy, then, for this conflict must be by *legislation;* and though I foresee infinite difficulty in adjusting the terms of any enactment on the subject, I confess I do not go along with those high advocates of privilege who maintain that they ought to resist any attempt to bring in *even an unobjectionable statute* in regard to it. Even they, I should think, would scarcely maintain that it would not be for their ease and dignity, as well as for the general good, that an act should be passed *interdicting and enjoining the courts of law* from entertaining any suit importing a disallowance of any assertion of privilege by House of Commons, as to certain matters and things; and I confess *this* would be the leading

and main enactment of any statute I should like to see proposed on the subject. But I should have no objection to its also containing a disclamation of all claim of privilege, in those cases of admitted abuse which have actually occurred, and in such other cases as might be agreed upon; and though it might be difficult to come to an agreement, yet I do not think it altogether hopeless, considering the constant vexation of such discussions as the present; and above all, I can see no reason why the House should refuse to enter upon the consideration, as they are quite certain that no act can ever pass except with their full and deliberate assent to everything it contains.

Craigcrook, Thursday.—I had not room on the margin yesterday to say all I wished as to the House of Commons being more of a *party* than the courts in questions of privilege, and of the *greater responsibility* of the latter; and the chief thing omitted was—that almost all the cases in which the House appears as a party—as in punishing for libel on House or members, or partial publication of evidence pending certain inquiries—*it is admitted* both by —— and —— that the assertion of privilege is *clearly right*, and may be necessary; while in the recent cases, on which all ——'s invective is showered, the House does not at all appear as a party, and *is* a party no otherwise than the *courts* are, when they afterwards do take up these same cases. The parties to all these cases are individuals injured, and slanderers, and they come

before the House as a proper judicial body by petition, either for leave to sue the action, or for an order to have injunction against its proceeding, in which the question of the conflicting claims of *the House* on one hand, and *the courts on the other*, to the executive disposal of such cases, is no doubt raised by these parties, and judgment demanded on it, in either; the relation in which the House and the courts stand to these parties, and to the cause, being precisely identical in all respects in the two tribunals, and being in no way different from what must subsist in every case of *disputed jurisdiction* which may be successively (or even simultaneously) brought by the proper parties before the courts whom it concerns.

I should have liked, too, to have pressed more distinctly on you, that the very basis and whole ground of my opinion being on the proposition that there is and *must be* an uncontrolled and irresponsible privilege, wherever its exercise is necessary or *material* to the due discharge of legislative functions—and, consequently, that the *only question* that can ever be raised in any particular case, is, whether it actually presents such a case of moral necessity? And considering how large, and loose, and broad, such a question must always be, I think it must at once occur that it is peculiarly unfit for a court used only to deal with precise and definite principles, and can only be safely trusted to a body necessarily and *exclusively* acquainted with all the special circumstances out of which the necessity may arise;—and that the H. of C. being alone such a body, its decision

upon it is far more likely to be right than that of a court of law. Both, I have already said, are truly *in pari casu*, as to being *parties* or judging in their own cause; and the only real question is, as to which should give way, or be of paramount authority, on the assertion of its jurisdiction? Looking only to the description of the two bodies, I cannot think this doubtful; the one, a small handful of *royal nominees*, presumed to be without party bias, and to have it as their first duty to *agree and be unanimous*,—the other, a large assembly, including, of course, all those best acquainted with constitutional law and principle, but so divided by party, as to be most unlikely to agree by any great majority in anything not clearly right, and far more under the influence of enlightened public opinion than any other body ever can be, and having really no common interest to pervert their judgment. If a jury of twelve men is thought the safest ultimate judge of most such questions—for the small chance it holds out of having some of these qualities,—is not a H. of C., chosen as ours now is, far better than such a jury? But I have taxed you too much about this already—and *liberavi animam*.

Here is my last word about privilege:—

You do not admit that House of Commons has right to exercise (without control) all the powers which *it thinks necessary* for its legislative functions. But I think you do, and *must*, admit, that it has and ought to have, all that *are* truly necessary for that purpose; and the sole question therefore is, *who* is to

judge what are so necessary? Upon all *constitutional and rational grounds* I hold that House of Commons much fitter and safer than any court of law, or the whole twelve nominees of the crown in a body. Though you do not admit *my principle* to this extent, you must admit (if you have a particle of candour) that, for the purpose of settling what is, and should be, privilege, the *principle*, *test*, and *rule of judgment*, must be what *is* truly necessary, or very material, for the best discharge of legislative duties? and that all reference either to *precedents* or *abuses* is wholly and generically *irrelevant*. If you do not admit this, I think you are not to be argued with; and the admission brings the case at once to the point I have mentioned.

This is the *first stage* of my argument, and in substance there is but another; and that is, that the whole question, as I have now stated it, being plainly and rigorously a question of *conflicting jurisdiction*, each of the courts or bodies must have an *equal right* (or duty) to adjudicate upon it, when brought before *them*, and be equally liable to the temptation of deciding it in their own favour—the *matter* to be adjudged being, in all cases, the same—viz., Whether the privilege asserted or questioned in any particular case, is truly essential to the right exercise of legislative functions? which, again, is plainly either a question of *fact* and experience, or of mere *constitutional policy*, and never, in any just sense, a question of *law*.

This is the sum of my argument; and I think I

am right in saying that it is not so much as touched by ——'s declamation, and but slightly by the details and reasonings of ———.

The whole, then, resolving into a conflict of independent and supreme jurisdiction, I agree that there is no final or practical solution but by *legislation*, upon the assumption (now, I fear, but too necessary) that neither party will be convinced by the reasonings of the other. I do not therefore go at all along with those who hold legislative interference incompetent or unconstitutional—which, indeed, cannot, I think, be even consistently asserted. But the question for the legislature is necessarily a question of *state policy*, and nothing else, and one upon which public opinion ought to be previously matured by large public discussion.

This may be one answer to your pragmatical and empirical question, why the two Houses, having common cause, and substantial power over the crown, do not at once settle the matter by an act, which they evidently may have all their own way? The necessity of taking public opinion with them is one answer. But, practically, there are many others. 1st, The two Houses are jealous of each other, and not likely to have the same specific questions of privilege before them at the same time; and so, might justly apprehend unreasonable factions and unfair interference mutually; and 2d, To do any good, the statute should embody a full *code* of privilege, which it would obviously be infinitely difficult to digest, while a successive settling

of special questions by consecutive enactments would not go to the root of the *conflict*, and would every day lead to greater risk of inconsistency and injustice, yet I think such a course will soon be inevitable.

166.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Craigcrook, Sunday.
[*Misplaced, because written after* 1843.]

One other *Scottish* Sunday blessing on you, before we cross the border; and a sweet, soothing, Sabbath-quiet day it is, with little sun, and some bright showers, but a silver sky, and a heavenly listening calm in the air, and a milky temperature of 67; with low-flying swallows, and loud-bleating lambs, and sleepy murmuring of bees round the heavy-headed flowers, and freshness and fragrance all about. Granny* went to the Free Church at Muttonhole, and Tarley† and I had our wonted walk of speculation, —I showing her over again, how the silk, and the muslin, and the flannel of her raiment, were prepared, with how much trouble and ingenuity; and then to the building of houses in all their details, and to the exchange of commodities from one country to another—woollen cloth for sugar, and knives and forks for wine, &c.; all which she followed and listened to with the most intelligent eagerness. She then had six gooseberries, of my selection, in the garden, and then she went up to Ali.‡ I went to meet Granny,

* Mrs. Jeffrey.
† Charlotte, his eldest grandchild, born 7th April 1838.
‡ A nursery maid.

on her way from the Free, whom I found just issuing from it, with the ancient pastor's wife,—the worthy Doctor himself having prayed and preached, with great animation, for better than two hours, in the 82d year of his age! * Soon after we came home, Rutherfurd came up from Lauriston, and we strolled about for a good while, when Charlotte and I conducted him on his way back, and are just come in at five o'clock. An innocent day it has been, at any rate, I think; and yet the heart is not right, and I have no feeling of health throughout the twenty-four hours. But I do not suffer, and am really alert and cheerful when the spasms are off, and have an existence of many enjoyments. Though the malady is in the circulation, I have little doubt that the immediate cause is dyspepsia; and therefore I think it may be obviated, or at all events relieved.

It would do *any* heart good to see the health and happiness of these children! The smiling, all-enduring, good humour of little Nancy, and the bounding spirits, quick sensibility, and redundant vitality, of Tarley. I sent you cautions about Maggie, and her voyages and travels, yesterday; to which, if she goes before we come, I hope you will attend, and not laugh at a grandpapa's anxieties. I had a nice letter from Empson last night (just a week old), and was glad to find from it, that his stay by the fountains † was to be so much shorter than I had imagined. He

* The Rev. Dr. Muirhead, formerly the Established, then the Free, minister of Cramond.

† Mr. Empson was at Weisbaden.

talks of coming away about the 7th, in which case he would be with you in ten days after we came, which would be delightful. I had feared he would not be coming till September. Now, if we hold our purpose of moving on Friday, *this* will be the last letter you can answer to Edinburgh. But we shall tell you to-morrow how you are to address after. I hope your heats are abated. With us the air is quite cool to-day, ther. only at 67; and I think there will be more showers. I wish you could see our roses, and my glorious white lilies, which I kiss every morning with a saint's devotion. We have been cutting out evergreens, and extending our turf, in the approach; and it looks a great deal more airy and extensive. Would you could have come to see it! But it will be still better next year, when you must and shall come. Heaven bless you!

167.—*To Miss Berry.*

Craigcrook, Sunday, 24th July 1842.

My dear Miss Berry—I think you will like to hear that your old fellow-sufferer has got through his spell of summer work, and is at least as well as when he began it. I hope, too, that you will expect to hear that he is most anxious to learn whether you have got as well through your spell of summer idleness? for, though he has not been entirely without tidings of you since he saw you, they have of late been scanty, and never had the authenticity which belongs to the *autograph* of the party concerned, &c.

You will understand, then, that I want to know about your health and spirits generally, and how you have been employing yourself, and what you intend to do with the remainder of the season, and with what views you look before and after, upon this shifting pageant of life? For my part, I think I grow more tranquil and contented, and I fancy, too, more indulgent to others, and certainly not less affectionate to those from whom I look for affection. But I want a few lessons still from you, and should be glad to be confirmed in what is right, and warned against what is wrong, in my estimate of the duties and enjoyments that may remain for declining age, &c. What a number of people have died since I was nearly given over, and in the fullness of time, too, last Christmas! And so many that seemed entitled to reckon on long years, and of happy existence! It is very sad to think of; and I can seldom contrast their fate with my own without feeling as if I had unjustly usurped a larger share of our common vitality than I had any right to; and more especially when I feel that I shall make no good use of what has been so lavished on me, &c.

I hope you are not quite so much alarmed as I am at this wide spread and lasting distress of the country, and wish you could give me comfort upon that, as well as other causes of anxiety. But my fears, I acknowledge, "stick deep," because I see in the gloomy aspect of affairs not so much the fruit of any mistaken policy or injudicious tenacity of mischievous restrictions, as the symptoms of that *in-*

evitable decay, which I have long anticipated from the loss of that *monopoly of the market* of the world which we have enjoyed for the last eighty years, and of which the growing skill and industry of other nations must, sooner or later, have deprived us. The crisis may have been accelerated by bad management, and may be softened, or warded off, for a short time (long enough, though, I hope for you and me) by good. But I do not see that it can be prevented, and am persuaded that within twenty years, and probably much sooner, we are doomed to a greater *revolution* than is yet recorded in our history. Do satisfy me, if you can, that these are the dreams of a poor provincial invalid, and, at all events, persuade *yourself* that they are, if it would give you any serious uneasiness to think otherwise, &c.—God bless you, and ever very faithfully yours.

168.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Craigcrook, 16th October 1842.

My dear Dickens—A thousand thanks to you for your charming book!* and for all the pleasure, profit, and *relief* it has afforded me. You *have* been very tender to our sensitive friends beyond sea, and really said nothing which should give any serious offence to any moderately rational patriot among them. The *Slavers*, of course, will give you no quarter, and I suppose you did not expect they should. But I do not think you could have said

* On America.

less, and my whole heart goes along with every word you have written. Some people will be angry too, that you have been so strict to observe their *spitting*, and neglect of ablutions, &c. And more, that you should have spoken with so little reverence of their courts of law and state legislature, and even of their grand Congress itself. But all this latter part is done in such a spirit of good-humoured playfulness, and so mixed up with clear intimations that you have quite as little veneration for things of the same sort *at home*, that it will not be easy to represent it as the fruit of *English* insolence and envy.

As to the rest, I think you have perfectly accomplished all that you profess or undertake to do; and that the world has never yet seen a more faithful, graphic, amusing, kind-hearted narrative than you have now bestowed on it. Always graceful and lively, and sparkling and indulgent, and yet relieved, or rather (in the *French* sense of the word) *exalted* by so many suggestions of deep thought, and so many touches of tender and generous sympathy (caught at once, and recognised like the signs of free masonry, by all whose hearts have been instructed in these mysteries), that it must be our own faults if we are not as much improved as delighted by the perusal. Your account of the silent or solitary imprisonment system is as pathetic and powerful a piece of writing as I have ever seen; and your sweet airy little snatch of the happy little woman, taking her new babe home to her young husband, and your manly and feeling appeal in behalf of the poor

Irish (or rather of the affectionate poor of all races and tongues), who are patient and tender to their children, under circumstances which would make half the exemplary parents among the rich monsters of selfishness and discontent, remind us that we have still among us the creator of Nelly, and Smike, and the schoolmaster, and his dying pupil, &c.; and must continue to win for you still more of that homage of the heart, that love and esteem of the just and the good, which, though it *should* never be disjoined from them, I think you must already feel to be better than fortune or fame.

Well, I have no doubt your 3000 copies will be sold in a week, and I hope you will tell me that they have put £1000 at least into your pocket. Many people will say that the work is a slight one, and say it perhaps truly. But every body will read it; and read it with pleasure to themselves, and growing regard for the author. More—and perhaps with *better* reason, for I am myself in the number—will think there is rather too much of Laura Bridgman and penitentiaries, &c., in general. But that, I believe, is chiefly because we grudge being so long parted from the personal presence of our entertainer as we are by these interludes, and therefore we hope to be forgiven by him.

And so God bless you! and prosper you in all your undertakings, and with best love and heartiest congratulations to my dear Mrs. Dickens (for here is an Exchequer process come in for me to dispose of).—Believe me always very affectionately yours.

Having got my head out of Exchequer sooner than I expected, I will not let this go without telling you that I continue tolerably well, though not without apprehension of the depressing effects of the coming winter, and great reliance, therefore, on the cordial you have almost promised to administer before its deepest gloom is over. I do not wish to let you forget this promise,—but can never wish, as you must know, that you should keep it with any inconvenience to yourself. I have strong hopes of living to see you in London in spring.

We had letters the other day from New York, where your memory, and the love of you, is still as fresh as ever. Good bye!

169.—*To John Richardson, Esq.*

Edinburgh, Wednesday Evening,
30th November 1842.

My dear Richardson—A great sorrow has fallen upon you,* and you must bear it! and what more is there to say? I need not tell you that we mourn over you, and over the extinction of that young life, and the sudden vanishing of those opening prospects and innocent hopes that shed a cheering influence on our old hearts, and seemed yet to connect us, in sympathy and affection, with a futurity which we were not ourselves very likely to see. And all this is over, and she is gone! and we are left to wonder and repine, and yet to cling to what

* By the death of his daughter Mrs. Reeve.

is left us of existence, and to feel that there are duties and affections that yet remain to us, and interests and sources of enjoyment too, that will spring up anew when this blight and darkening have passed over. God help us! We must be as we are, and we must suffer and wait for healing, and do what we can to anticipate the time of our restoration, and force ourselves therefore to dwell most on those considerations, which, though belonging to impressions which must still engross us, are likely to give them some character of soothing and comfort. All her past life was happy, and blameless, and amiable. It must always be grateful (and a cause of gratitude) to think of this. Then you did your duty, gently and faithfully, to her, and much of her enjoyment was owing to your kindness and watchful love. There must be unspeakable and unfailing comfort in that reflection. But you know all this, and I am persuaded you feel it, and I only twaddle in speaking thus to you. Yet my heart is full of the subject, and I cannot help saying something. Charlotte has been more moved than I have seen her since the death of her father; and indeed the grief and sympathy which this sad event has called forth has been deeper and more universal than I almost ever remember.

I hope Helen* has not suffered in her health, and that you are all now reasonably tranquil. You have fortunately dear and affectionate children still around you, and you must, and will comfort each other.

* Mr. Richardson's second daughter.

God bless and support you, my dear and kind-hearted old friend.—Ever affectionately yours.

170.—*To John Ramsay M'Culloch, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 12th December 1842.

My dear M'Culloch—I received your obliging letter of the 9th yesterday, and thank you for it. I have also read carefully the little pamphlet you enclose, with the whole drift and tenor of which I entirely agree, and think it indeed very admirably thought and expressed. I cannot say, however, that I go so thoroughly along with all the views in your letter, and wish I could feel the same assurance you seem to do, as to our being in no danger from foreign competition, assisted and aggravated in its effects (as we may surely reckon that it will be) by national jealousies and erroneous notions of self-interest. Indeed, if it were not for this competition, I do not clearly see how the increase of our manufacturing population should be a subject of regret or alarm, or on what grounds any serious or permanent distress need be apprehended, among these classes in particular. I quite sympathise with you, however, in your wish that we could be allowed to see more than we are likely to do, of the actual working of the causes that are now in operation, and the movements that are visibly begun.* I am more

* Mr. M'Culloch had expressed a wish that he could come back in about three hundred years, to see the result of the political and economical principles now in action.

modest, however, in my prayer for the gift of prescience than you are, and should be satisfied to have a clear vision of the condition of this country some time about the year 1900, before which, I feel persuaded, the problems we are puzzled about will all be substantially resolved. Indeed (if it were the same thing to the power who can alone grant such prayers), I should prefer being *allowed to live and see the results*, in their actual accomplishment, rather than wonder at them in a prophetic dream. But I should be glad to have either of the boons!

I continue pretty well, I thank you, and certainly feel much relieved by the later hours which my Inner House* duties allow me to indulge in. I also get on very comfortably with my new associates; and not having been one day out of court since May, expect to get through this long session without much annoyance, and to see you in town in April, in nearly as good condition as in former years, &c.—Ever very faithfully yours.

171.—*To Lord Cockburn.*

Hayleybury, 26th March 1843.

My dear C.—A thousand thanks for your nice letter, which I found on my return yesterday from a two days' *lark* to London; in the course of which I saw, in forty-eight short hours, ten times as many male friends (and missed as many female, for the most part my old friends however) as I see in Edinburgh in a year. Empson and I ran up on Thurs-

* The Court he had now removed to.

day, and I contrived before dinner to see poor Richardson in his den; rather low at first, but busy as usual, and very kind, and affectionately anxious for all his friends. Helen has been pining, and he means to send her, under the escort of Reeve, for a fortnight or so to Paris. I likewise left my card for Bright and the Berrys, and then went to dine, you will allow very thankfully, at my doctor's (Holland), where we had a grand party—Lady Holland and Allen, Hallam and Rogers, and the Cunliffes, Crews, and other dignitaries, and much pleasant talk. A great assembly in the evening—the Sydney Smiths—my Lords Campbell—Monteagle and Mahon, with their spouses, Ladies Morley, Dunstanville, Charlemont, &c., with lots of other people, by whom I was caressed and complimented on my *youth and beauty*, in a style of which you frozen Muscovites of the north have no conception. Next morning we had a charming breakfast with Rogers, with only Lord John Russell and Tommy Moore, both most gentle, sociable, and pleasant; and we all sat till near one, when I called on my friends the Cayleys —then on Lady T. Lister—then to the Carlisles, whom I did not find—then to Lady Holland's, and to Macaulay's, and Lord Melbourne's. Dined at the Monteagles with the De Veres, my excellent friend Stephen Milman, John Mill, and the Bishop of Norwich, whom I carried down in a cab to the Berrys—had much talk with Lady Morley and Dillon, and Mrs. Dawson Damer, till ——— burst in, in a state of frenzy of high spirits, and

roared and rattled in a way that was almost frightful, till he drove Macaulay and other quiet people away. . . . . .

If I had stayed, I should have dined at Lady Holland's to meet the Lansdownes and Morpeths, &c., but I had a warning of trachea, and resolved to fly for it, and regain my shades. And so, after breakfasting with Macaulay, and making him read a bit of his history, I went up to Lockhart's to see Lady Gifford, and called in vain on Dickens, and we set off about three o'clock, and got here quietly to dinner, and shall stay here for at least a week to come.

172.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 26th December 1843.

Blessings on your kind heart, my dear Dickens! and may it always be as light and full as it is kind, and a fountain of kindness to all within reach of its beatings! We are all charmed with your Carol, chiefly, I think, for the genuine *goodness* which breathes all through it, and is the true inspiring angel by which its genius has been awakened. The whole scene of the Cratchetts is like the dream of a beneficent angel in spite of its broad reality, and little *Tiny Tim*, in life and death almost as sweet and as touching as Nelly. And then the school-day scene, with that large-hearted delicate sister, and her true inheritor, with his gall-lacking liver, and milk of human kindness for blood, and yet all so natural, and so humbly and serenely happy!

Well, you should be happy yourself, for you may be sure you have done more good, and not only fastened more kindly feelings, but prompted more positive acts of beneficence, by this little publication, than can be traced to all the pulpits and confessionals in Christendom, since Christmas 1842.

And is not this better than caricaturing American knaveries, or lavishing your great gifts of fancy and observation on Pecksniffs, Dodgers, Bailleys, and Moulds. Nor is this a mere crotchet of mine, for nine-tenths of your readers, I am convinced, are of the same opinion; and accordingly, I prophecy that you will sell three times as many of this moral and pathetic Carol as of your grotesque and fantastical Chuzzlewits.

I hope you have not fancied that I think less frequently of you, or love you less, because I have not lately written to you. Indeed, it is not so; but I have been poorly in health for the last five months, and advancing age makes me lazy and perhaps forgetful. But I do not forget my benefactors, and I owe too much to you not to have you constantly in my thoughts. I scarcely know a single individual to whom I am indebted for so much pleasure, and the means at least of being made better. I wish you had not made such an onslaught on the Americans. Even if it were all merited, it does mischief, and no good. Besides, you know that there are many exceptions; and if ten righteous might have saved a city once, there are surely innocent and amiable men and women, and besides boys

and girls, enough in that vast region, to arrest the proscription of a nation. I cannot but hope, therefore, that you will relent before you have done with them, and contrast your deep shadings with some redeeming touches. God bless you. I must not say more to-day.—With most kind love to Mrs. Dickens, always very affectionately yours, &c.

Since writing this in the morning, and just as I was going to seal it, in comes another copy of the Carol, with a flattering autograph on the blank page, and an address in your own "fine Roman hand." I thank you with all my heart, for this proof of your remembrance, and am pleased to think, that while I was so occupied about you, you had not been forgetful of me. Heaven bless you, and all that are dear to you.—Ever yours, &c.

173.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 1st February 1844.

My dear Dickens—In *the second* place, thanks for your kind letter. But, *imprimis*, still warmer thanks for your two charming chapters of Tom Pinch, which are in the old and true vein, which no man but yourself either knows where to look for, or how to work, after it has been laid open to all the world, &c.

It is not *that* at all I wish to say to you. No, no; it is about that most flattering wish, or, more probably, passing fancy, of that dear Kate * of yours,

* Mrs. Dickens.

to associate my name with yours over the baptismal font of your new-come boy. My first impression was, that it was a mere piece of kind badinage of hers (or perhaps your own), and not meant to be seriously taken, and consequently that it would be foolish to take any notice of it. But it has since occurred to me, that, if you had really meditated so great an honour for me, you would naturally think it strange, if I did not in some way acknowledge it, and express the deep sense I should certainly have of such an act of kindness. And so I write now, to say, in all fulness and simplicity of heart, that, if such a thing is indeed in your contemplation, it would be more flattering and agreeable to me than most things that have befallen me in this mortal pilgrimage; while, if it was but the sportful expression of a happy and confiding playfulness, I shall still feel grateful for the communication, and return you a smile as cordial as your own, and with full permission to both of you to smile at the simplicity which could not distinguish jest from earnest. And such being the object of the missive, I shall not plague you with any smaller matters for the present; only I shall not be satisfied, if the profits of the Carol do not ultimately come up to my estimate, &c.

I want amazingly to see you rich, and independent of all irksome exertions; and really, if you go on having more boys (and naming them after poor Scotch plebeians), you must make good bargains and lucky hits, and, above all, accommodate yourself

oftener to that deeper and higher tone of human feeling, which, *you now see experimentally*, is more surely and steadily popular than any display of fancy, or magical power of observation and description combined. And so God be with you, &c.—Always very affectionately yours.

174.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Tuesday, 27th February 1844.

Seven o clock.—No afternoon letters yet, though we have had neither snow nor blow since last night. However, we have had your Saturday's despatch this morning, and are thankful. It brightened, and grew very cold last night, and I went to sleep under five blankets! with thermometer at twenty-one, and a fierce twinkling moon very far to the north. But it relented before morning, and this day has been sweet and vernal—a soft south wind and a cheerful sun; and, except that the melting snow made things sloppy, every thing very amiable. Thermometer at forty-one. We drove down to the pier,* and resumed our terraqueous promenade after a five days' interruption. Very gay and grand also, the bright waves leaping and clapping their hands beneath us, and the shores rising sunny and speckly, with tracts of bright snow and black woodland, on the near slopes, and the remoter mountains shining like summer clouds in their untainted whiteness, &c.

We had two cases adjusted to-day, and got out

* Of Leith.

early, so that I had near an hour at the Exhibition,* and saw many things to admire. The two pictures that interested me most were both very Scottish, and I think would touch your simple Scotch heart, as they did mine. One is a shepherd's funeral;† the coffin journeying, in a still, dullish autumn day, in a slight made cart, across a true Scottish upland, with an ancient feeble driver, and the stiff pensive *colly*, stepping languidly by his side, a worn out rough old pony in the harness, and a long train of plaided mourners, of all ages, wending soberly behind. It is really very well painted, and has been sold for £250. The other is still more *pathetic* to my feelings. It is the departure of a company of Highland emigrants for foreign shores—a beautiful, though bare and rugged Highland landscape, with a soft summer sea sleeping among the rocks, and under the light haze of the dawning. The large emigrant ship looms dim and dark in the soft mist, and a large barge is rowing towards it, in which plaided and snooded figures are crowded, waving bonnets and hands; while on the beach is the broken-down and deserted grandfather, stooping, with his bald temples and clasped hands, in an attitude of speechless sorrow, while the ancient dame sits crouching before him, with her plaid drawn close round her head, unable to bear the sight of that parting; and a beautiful young sheep-dog is howling,

* The Annual Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy of Painting, &c.

† By Mr. George Harvey, Edinburgh.

with his nose in the air, at the furthest point of the promontory. I have seldom seen a picture I should like more to have, though I could not look at it without tears.* No post yet, &c.—Ever yours.

175.—*To Mrs. A. Rutherfurd.*

E. I. College, Thursday, 9th May 1844.

I am a great deal better, and really *angry* at myself for having been so ill as to give you so much uneasiness. For ten days, to be sure, I was ill enough, and after near a fortnight in bed cannot be supposed to be very strong yet. But the fever I think is gone, and the cough I hope going, and I now actually contemplate being able to embark in the train of Wednesday next for Lancaster, which will bring me to Edinburgh with all my little ones on Saturday, just time enough to be ready for our meeting on Tuesday, &c.

These warnings come thick you see, my Sophy, and if the next should usher in *the actual striking of the hour*, it cannot be said to have come without notice. But I am very calm and tranquil with all this consciousness; and never was more cheerful, and indeed inwardly happy, than I have been through all this last visitation.

I should have written to you as soon as I was able to write, had I not been quite in the dark as to your whereabouts. As it was, I wrote to Cockburn on the first distinct mending, and I hope he

* It was by Mr. J. C. Brown, Edinburgh.

will have communicated with you before this can reach you.

I hope you are yourself quite well and enjoying this beautiful weather—all the mornings at least at Lauriston. Here it has been rather too hot. Ther. in the shade at this moment 76, and the nightingales thundering as loud as the cuckoo. God bless you always, my very dear Sophia.—Ever affectionately yours.

176.—*To Mrs. Fletcher.*

(The widow of the late Archd. Fletcher, Esq., Advocate.)

Berwick, Friday Night, 14th —— 1844.

My dear Mrs. Fletcher—You will see from this date that we cannot avail ourselves this time of your most kind offer of a meeting at Kendal, &c.

I was sure you would like Empson's Memorial of Arnold. There was so much of true heart in it, that it could not but go to all true hearts. I do not think he ever loved or venerated a living creature so deeply as he does his memory; and I believe he has not yet done with him, as you may probably see in the next number of the Edinburgh.

Alas, for poor Sydney! and poor Bobus* has gone swiftly after him! What havoc death has been making among the seniors since last Christmas! I hope he will now hold his hand a little, or, at all events, allow you and me to look upon one another once more through the eyes of the flesh, however dim some of them may be waxing. There is no

* Mr. Sydney Smith's brother.

sight, I am sure, that would rejoice mine so much. For of all that are left me from the old days of our youth, there is no one whom I love so tenderly, trust so entirely, or respect so uniformly, as you; and if you do not know it, why you scarcely deserve to have it said or thought of you.

My friends have been very kind to me in coming to my simple haphazard little assemblies. To me they were undoubtedly very pleasant, and partly, I daresay, to that sort of revival of old usages to which you refer; and I think they could not have been unpleasant to those who came back to them so frequently and freely, &c.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Fletcher, very affectionately yours.

177.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

July 1844.

. . . . . .

Well, ——— and I had our walk all over the fields, and gathered a good basket of mushrooms. Our talk* to-day was of the difference between plants and animals, and of the half-life and volition that were indicated by the former; and of the goodness of God, in making flowers so beautiful to the eye, and us capable of receiving pleasure from their beauty, which the other animals are not; and then a picture by me of the first trial flights and adventures of a brood of young birds, when first encouraged by their mother to trust themselves to the air—which excited

* With his grandchild Charlotte.

great interest, especially the dialogue parts between the mother and the young. She has got a tame jackdaw, whose voracity in gobbling slips of raw meat, cut into the semblance of worms, she very much admires, as well as his pale blue eyes. She was pleased to tell me yesterday, with furious bursts of laughter, that I was "an old man," "very old;" and was with difficulty persuaded to admit that Flush * (the true original old man) was a good deal older.

I hope I am better; though I am very glad to think, that in three weeks more I shall be free from the courts. I am as much as possible in the open air, and still have my evening walks, even when it is chilly.

I have got Arnold's Life, &c.; but have scarcely had time to read any of it yet, the courts taking a good deal of time, and my out-door lounges no little. But I shall begin it seriously to-night. I could not stop reading that admirable review of Stephen's on the Clapham Worthies, which is all charmingly written, and many passages inimitably. The sketches of Granville Sharpe, C. Simeon, and Lord Teignmouth, are, beyond comparison, superior to any of ———'s elaborate portraits, or even any of Macaulay's stronger pictures, in vivacity and force of colouring, as well as in that soft tone of angelic pity and indulgence, which gives its character to the whole piece. The eulogies of H. Thornton and H. Martyn are rather overdone, I think; but Zac. Macaulay is excellent, and so are the slighter sketches of Will. Smith and

* An old dog.

the paternal Stephen. I hope they will give you as much pleasure as they have given me. They are so much in accordance, indeed, with all I love and admire in human writings, that I feel as if they had been intended for my especial gratification. I have also read a volume of the *Mysteries of Paris*, and been much touched and delighted with the gentle and innocent pictures, but tempted to pass over much of the horrors. It is a book of genius undoubtedly; but how utterly regardless is that class of writers of not the probable only, but the *possible!* and how much does the superiority of Sir Walter appear in his producing equal effects, without such sacrifices. Heaven bless you.—Ever most affectionately yours.

178.—*To Mr. Dickens.*

Edinburgh, 12th December 1844.

Blessings on your kind heart, my dearest Dickens, for *that*, after all, is your great talisman, and the gift for which you will be not only most loved, but longest remembered. Your kind and courageous advocacy of the rights of the poor—your generous assertion, and touching displays, of their virtues, and the delicacy as well as the warmth of their affections, have done more to soothe desponding worth—to waken sleeping (almost dead) humanities—and to shame even selfish brutality, than all the other writings of the age, and make it, and all that are to come after, your debtors.

Well, you understand from this (though it was

all true before) that the music of your chimes had reached me, and resounded through my heart, and that I thank you with all that is left of it.

I think I need not say that I have been charmed with them, or even after what fashion, or by what notes principally. You know me well enough to make that out without prompting. But I could not *reserve* my tears for your third part. From the meeting with Will on the street, they flowed and ebbed at your bidding; and I know you will forgive me for saying that my interest in the story *began* there. Your opening chorus of the church-going wind is full of poetry and painting, and the meeting of Trotty and Meg very sweet and graceful. But I do not care about your Alderman and his twaddling friends, and think their long prosing in the street dull and unnatural. But after Will and Lillian come on the scene, it is all delicious, every bit of it—the vision as well as the reality; and the stern and terrible pictures of (the visionary) Will and the child, as well as the angel sweetness of Meg, and the expiating agony of poor Lillian. The delicacy with which *her* story is left mostly in shadow, and the thrilling pathos of both her dialogues with Meg, are beyond the reach of any pen but your own, and *it* never did anything better. And yet I have felt the pathos of those parts, and indeed throughout, almost painfully oppressive. Sanative, I daresay, to the spirit, but making us despise and loathe ourselves for passing our days in luxury, while better and gentler creatures are living such lives as

makes us wonder that such things can be in a society of human beings, or even in the world of a good God.

Your Bell spirits, and all the secrets of their race, is a fine German extravaganza, and shews that if you did not prefer "stooping to truth, and moralising your song," you could easily beat all the Teutonic mystics and ghost seers to sticks at their own weapons. It is a better contrived, and far more richly adorned, machinery than the Christmas incarnations that exorcised the demon of ——, though, by the way, there is less poetical justice in frightening poor innocent Trotty with such a tissue of horrors as might be requisite to soften the stony heart of the miser.

I run no risk in predicting that you will have a great run, and may start with 10,000 copies. Yet there will be more objections this time than the last. The aldermen, and justices, friends, and fathers, &c., and in short all the tribe of selfishness, and cowardice, and cant, will hate you in their hearts, and cavil when they can; will accuse you of wicked exaggeration, and excitement to discontent, and what they pleasantly call disaffection! But never mind—the good and the brave are with you, and the truth also, and in that sign you will conquer.

I started when I found you dating from London, and can scarcely believe that you have really been there, and back again! But I do hope you are back safely, and have not been snuffed out, and pulled from under the snow, by the St. Bernard retrievers. Do not cross those ridges again though, in mid-win-

ter. I am charmed with your accounts of my boy, and hope his sweet mother loves him as much as you do. I hope too that she likes Italy, and yet does not forget Britain. I can excuse her preferring her present abode for the winter. But when our own mild, moist, ever green summer comes, you must all return to us. I am in better hope of living till then than I was when I came here in October. Neither the winter nor the work have done me any harm, but good rather; and, though a poor enough creature still, I am better than I was, and live a very tranquil and rather happy sort of life. And so God bless you, and your true-hearted Catherine, and my boy, and all of you!—Ever affectionately yours.

179.—*To Lord Cockburn.*

East India College, Hertford,
26th March 1845.

My dear C.—I think I should like to hear from you; and so I make it a duty, by thus writing to you. You have heard, of course, of our safe arrival, after the pains and perils of our wintry journey. I have little to tell you of the quiet, innocent patriarchal life, we have been since living, in peace, love, and humility, and utterly undisturbed by the vices and vanities, the luxuries and ambitions, that prey upon you men of the world. The college, too, is luckily in vacation, which helps the deep tranquillity of our contemplative existence. And so I have been reading the Leviathan and the Odyssey,

and the works of Sir H. Vane, and Milton, political prose, and trudging about on the upland commons, which are all sprinkled with lambs, and under a sky all alive with larks, and meditating at eve, and holding large discourse with Empson, upon things past and future, and present and possible; eating little, and drinking less, and sleeping least of all; but possessing my heart in patience, and envying the robustious as little as I can. We are to have my eloquent dreamy friend Stephen for some days after Saturday, and perhaps Hallam; and in the meantime I have occasional colloquies with Jones on political economy, and the prospects of the world when machinery has superseded all labour but that of engine-makers, and when there is an end of established churches. We have got spring at last, though everything is very backward, and I never saw these meadows so little green, or these woods so utterly dead. How are you at Bonaly?

Has anybody thought of taking up my Tuesday and Friday evenings? which, upon looking back to them, seem to me like a faint, but not quite unsuccessful, revival of a style of society which was thought to have some attraction in the hands of Dugald Stewart and some others; though, I fear, we have now fallen in an age too late for such a revival, and that nothing but an amiable consideration for my infirmities could have given it the success it had. We have had bad accounts of poor Macvey Napier,* and should like to hear from some authen-

* His successor in editing the Review.

tic quarter how he really is. The Rutherfurds, I understand, will soon be in these latitudes. When do you go on your circuit? and how does Jane and your Australian wanderer come on. Frank, I am happy to find, has fully maintained his character for steadiness and heroic adherence to duty. Now, let me have a good large sheet, full of gossip, and queries, and admonitions.

180.—*To Mrs. Sydney Smith.*

Craigcrook, 14th June 1845.

My dear Mrs. Smith—I do not systematically destroy my letters, but I take no care of them, and very few I fear have been preserved or remain accessible. I shall make a search, however, and send you all I can recover.

I was very glad to hear, some little time ago, that Moore had agreed to assist in preparing the Memorial* about which you are naturally so much interested. He will do it, I am sure, in a right spirit, and with the feeling that we are all anxious to see brought to its execution. Then, he writes gracefully, and is so great a favourite with the public, that the addition of his name cannot fail to be a great recommendation.

If it occurs to me, on reflection, that there is anything I can contribute, in the way you suggest, I shall be most happy to have my name associated with his on such an occasion.

* Of her husband.

You know it must always be a pleasure to me to comply with any request of yours; and the form in which you ask this to be done is certainly that which I should prefer to any other; yet the models to which you refer might well deter me from attempting anything that might lead to a comparison.*

I am glad to think of you at Munden rather than in Green Street in this charming weather, and beg to be most kindly remembered there to my beloved Emily, and all her belongings, &c.—Ever very affectionately yours.

181.—*To Sir George Sinclair.*

Craigcrook, Blackhall,
Saturday, 1st August 1846.

My dear Sir George—Indeed, indeed, you have mistaken, or done me wrong. I am not at all changed to you, and have the same belief in your kind heart, large philanthropy, and unutterable sweetness of temper, as I ever had; and the same sense, too, of your invariable kindness to me. But our ways of life have lately been more apart, and for some years back my health has been so much broken, that I have rarely been able for more than the indispensable duties of my place, and had therefore, I doubt not, to neglect many other duties, which are at least as important.

I have no distinct recollection of your ever having called on me, without *an attempt* at least, on my part

* These *models* are two letters by Mr. Smith—one published in Mackintosh's Memoirs, vol. II. p. 498, and one in Horner's Memoirs, vol. II. p. 434.

to see you, and I am sure, never without *a wish* for our meeting.

On the occasion you mention, I think I must have been indisposed, though I do remember having gone once at least, if not oftener, to look for you, and being mortified on finding that you had already left the town.

But you are surely a little uncharitable in construing a circumstance like this, even if there were no explanation of it, into proof of such a change of sentiment on my part as would imply, not only a contemptible levity of character, but (I must say, because I feel it) a very hateful coldness and ingratitude of nature. But we need not go back upon these things. I feel that you will believe me when I say that you have been mistaken—that I have never ceased to regard you with the same affection which arose in my mind, from your first remarkable introduction to me by the old Duchess of Gordon—and which was rivetted and confirmed by all the intercourse we had while we sat in Parliament together—that I was touched, even to weeping, by the extreme tenderness of some expressions in your letter to my wife—and that she, knowing well how I have always felt and spoken of you, though not so much hurt as I was by your complaint of altered feelings, really was not less *surprised* at it.

But I must have done with this. We are friends again, now at least, and must have no more misunderstandings.

I heard of your domestic afflictions, and felt for you I think as I ought. But while I hear also of

the good you continue to do in your neighbourhood, and the popularity you enjoy, I cannot allow myself to think that your existence is without its consolations and even its enjoyments, and these not of the lowest order. Neither can I entirely approve of your sequestering yourself for ever in that remote corner. A man with so many friends has a wider sphere, both of duty and beneficence; and I am persuaded that you will soon feel this, and act upon it.

For my own part, my health, I am happy to say, is now about as good as it generally is. I am liable to frequent little attacks, which, at my age, are alarming, but not often attended with much suffering, and which I have learned to bear with, I hope, very tolerable patience. I manage, I think, to extract a fair enough share of comfort, and even of enjoyment, from a very reduced allowance of vitality. If you ever feel that you want a lesson in this art, I shall be too happy to give you the benefit of my precept and example.

I am here now with my daughter and her husband and their four children, and flatter myself that we make a very pretty patriarchal household, and with as much affection and as little *ennui* among us, as in any patriarchal establishment since the deluge, or before it. I wish you would come and see. You would like Empson I am sure, the gentleness of whose disposition and the kindness of his heart often remind me of you. I can scarcely offer you a bed while they are with me; but you could board here, and easily have a lodging in the neighbourhood.

And so God bless you, my dear Sir George; and for the rest of our lives believe me, with all good wishes, very affectionately yours.

182.—*To Mrs. E. Cayley.*

Craigcrook, Blackhall, Edinburgh,
Thursday, 6th August 1846.

My dear Emma—It is unaccountable to myself why I have not answered your letter long ago. Can you explain this to me? I was thankful enough for it, I am sure, and, indeed, both touched and flattered by it, more than I shall now try to tell you, and I did mean to write immediately, only one grows old, and good for nothing, I fear! and so you must even be contented to love me a little as I am, and to know that I love you, and shall always, as long as there is any life left in the heart of this poor carcass.

I cannot tell you whether anybody finds my old age *beautiful*, but I am sure it is *not unhappy;* and I really do not think it ought, for I have as ready a sympathy as ever for the happiness of others, and as great a capacity for loving, and as great a desire to be loved. And though my health is a good deal broken, and my animal vitality rather low, I rather think that both my intellectual and social alacrity are as great as when we were first acquainted. I read more, I believe, than I ever did (though I fancy I forget more of what I read), and *talk* (I am afraid) nearly as much; and though I have given up dining

out, or going much into general society, a great many people are kind enough to come to me; and my days are at least as cheerful as when more of my hours were spent in company. I have now my four grandchildren and their parents, all under my roof again, and I think we live a very exemplary, and not unenviable patriarchal life together, with as much affection, and as little *ennui* among us as could be found in any patriarchal establishment since the deluge, or before it.

I tell you all this, partly because you ask me to tell you all about myself, but chiefly because I believe you to have a very genuine relish for the patriarchal life yourself, and will not dislike to hear that you cannot look for the full enjoyment of all its innocent pleasures till you are old enough to share them with *the second generation* of your descendants. In the meantime, however, it is very pleasing to me to know that you have so much satisfaction in the first; and I pray and trust that this may go on increasing, till, in the fulness of time, the second shall come still further to increase it. I am very much obliged to Edward for the kind lift his partiality led him to lend me in the estimation of his son, though my conscience certainly does whisper me that the judgment of the junior is, in this matter, the most correct. I rejoice, too, to find that you still retain unimpaired that delight in the beautiful aspects of external nature, which I really believe forms a very very large part of the enjoyment of good people, and which, when once confirmed, not only

does not decay, like most other emotions which come through the senses, but seems rather to grow more lively with the decay of everything else. I hope, too, that E. has got quite over the shock which the sudden loss of his father must have occasioned. Will this event lead you to leave Wydale? or materially affect your worldly position? When you write again (which I hope you will do soon), tell me about Sir George and all the rest. You know I take a brother's interest in the whole genealogy, and also about Mary Agnes, of whom I had a glimpse in April, and was half provoked to see how importantly happy she looked in her married state.

And so God bless you, my very dear Emma, and with all good wishes, believe me, ever very affectionately yours.

183.—*To the Hon. the Lady John Russell.*

Edinburgh, 21st December 1846.

My dear Lady John—I feel quite obliged to Mr. Fraser for bringing me to your recollection; and must therefore give you as favourable an account of him as possible, &c.

I rejoice with you in the thaw, though I cannot say that I suffered (except a little in mere sensation) from the frost, and have been able to go through my court work, and my little evening receptions, quite as well as last year. It is very good in you to remember my sentiments to you in the hotel. I never pass by its windows, in these winter twilights, with-

out thinking of you, and of the lessons of cheerful magnanimity (as well as of other things) I used to learn by your couch; though I am delighted to learn, that you are no longer in the way of improving the world by the special example of these virtues.

The Murrays and Rutherfurds are particularly well. The latter will soon be up among you, and at his post, for the opening of a campaign of no common interest and anxiety. For my part, I am terribly frightened, for the first time in my life. Lord John, I believe, does not know what fear is. *Sans peur* as *sans reproche.* But it must be a comfort to know, that even he thinks we can get out of the mess in Ireland, without some dreadful calamity; and how ugly, in fact, do things look all round the world!

In spite of all this, I must wish you a merry Christmas! and, as we have now got to the darkest day of the physical year, desire you to hope, that we may also find ourselves at our social and political mid-winter, and try to believe that brighter days are coming. And so, with all good wishes, ever, my dear Lady John, your obliged and faithful, &c.

184.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Craigcrook, Sunday, 30th May.

Bless you all, my darlings! and keep you well, and loving, and happy! The world looks happy here, this morning, for May is going out rather more

like herself than she came in, or has hitherto progressed. There was a glorious moon last night, and a bright sun this morning, and the ther. is up to sixty-two (which, as it is only ten o'clock yet, we think a great deal), and there is but little wind, and the grass is of a deeper green, and the new leafing of the trees so light, and tender, and graceful, and the sheep so well washed by the thunder showers of yesterday morning, so white and foam-like, as they lie in tufts on the lawn, and the boy is full of egg, and Tarley of bacon, and Granny does not go to church, but Ali instead, and the horses, and donkey too, are to have a holiday, and we are to walk, altogether, over the hills and under the greenwood, and not to do work, or have lessons more than we like, and we have no spite, or envy, or ambition, among us, and no pains (to speak of) in our bodies, and no remorses, or ennuis, or want of alacrity in our minds, and so we have reason, I think, for thankfulness and content.

If you were here with me, I could help you, I think, to some purpose, with the Review,* but, at this distance, I can do little good. I told you yesterday that St. Francis had rather disappointed me, and that I liked Tancred very well, and, as yet, that is all I have seen. I have no doubt that the time you have spent on Burton and Bailey will turn out very well spent. I think you have a better knack, *even than I*, in touching in lights and bringing out effects, by such revisals, as I have less patience to

* Which Mr. Empson now conducted.

watch the capacities of improvement, and was more given to dash out and substitute, by wholesale, than to interweave graces, or lace seams; besides that your method has the advantage of startling the original authors less, and may often leave them, indeed, unconscious (and unthankful) of the regeneration thus gradually wrought in them; only do not make yourself sick, nor neglect your other duties, for the reformation of those sinners.

I have had a walk since I wrote this, and met Granny and the babes on the hill, and brought them home to dinner; and now Ali has returned to her post, and the boy has nestled again in her bosom, though he never seemed to miss her absence. It is but poor summer yet, and May will depart, after all, without honour or blessings. There is more wind than I thought of, and the feeling of the air is chilly, even at three o'clock. Ther. only sixty-three. Why the devil do you keep so much of the heat to yourselves? Yet our lilies are very superior, but will be over before you can see them; and we have some china roses, both red and yellow, and plenty of honeysuckle, and some splendid azalias, and good peonies—though these, too, will not wait your coming—and fair promise of rhododendrons and gentians, still in matchless glory, though hardly a flower on the geraniums. You see I have been taking a correct survey of our flora, and, in truth, there is scarcely a plant that I have not visited in the leisurely stroll of this morning. Granny being at home, I have had no theology, or philosophy, with Tarley, but have communed very peacefully with myself.

185.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Sunday.

Your Sunday's blessing, is it? That you may be well sure of; and here it is for you, as warm and hearty and earnest as I can give it; and much good may it do your good heart, as I feel it will, and to mine too, that is not a penny the poorer for giving it. A nice Sunday, too, it is, though more autumnal than it has been—thermometer down to 44, and wind a little off the north; but a bright, cheerful day, with clear distances all round, and brilliant effects of light and shade on tower and tree, and hill and water. Granny went to church, and I read a very interesting little volume of "Irish Ballad Poetry," published by that poor Duffy of the Nation, who died so prematurely the other day. There are some most pathetic, and many most spirited, pieces; and all, with scarcely an exception, so entirely *national.* Do get the book, and read it. I am most struck with *Sogarth Aroon*, after the two first stanzas; and a long, racy, authentic, sounding dirge for the Tyrconnel Princes (p. 103). But you had better begin with the Irish Emigrant, and the Girl of Loch Dan, which immediately follows, which will break you in more gently to the wilder and more impassioned parts. It is published in 1845, and as a part of "Duffy's Library of Ireland." You see what a helpless victim I still am to these enchanters of the lyre. I did not mean to say but a word of this book to you, and here I am furnishing

you with extracts. But God bless all poets! and you will not grudge them a share even of your Sunday benedictions. Maggie is charming. She and Buckley* had a long ramble, and Tusculan disputation, I doubt not, in our classic back garden, among falling leaves and falling waters; and she has since had a good dinner; and now she is busked up very fine with all Granny's bracelets and necklaces, with a bright handkerchief, turban fashion, on her head, and her petticoats looped up, to show off one very resplendent garter; and in all that finery I left her insisting on being hired as a maid of all work,—she would scour all the kettles, and sleep contentedly in the ashes! I have no news.

186.—*To Mr. Charles Dickens.*

Edinburgh, 31st January 1847.

Oh, my dear dear Dickens! what a No. 5 you have now given us! I have so cried and sobbed over it last night, and again this morning; and felt my heart purified by those tears, and blessed and loved you for making me shed them; and I never can bless and love you enough. Since that divine Nelly was found dead on her humble couch, beneath the snow and the ivy, there has been nothing like the actual dying of that sweet Paul, in the summer sunshine of that lofty room. And the long vista that leads us so gently and sadly, and yet so gracefully and winningly, to that plain consummation!

* A nursery maid.

Every trait so true, and so touching—and yet lightened by that fearless innocence which goes *playfully* to the brink of the grave, and that pure affection which bears the unstained spirit, on its soft and lambent flash, at once to its source in eternity. In reading of these delightful children, how deeply do we feel that "of such is the kingdom of Heaven;" and how ashamed of the contaminations which *our* manhood has received from the contact of earth, and wonder how *you* should have been admitted into that pure communion, and so "presumed, an earthly guest, and drawn Empyrial air," though for our benefit and instruction. Well, I did not mean to say all this; but this I must say, and you will believe it, that of the many thousand hearts that will melt and swell over these pages, there can be few that will feel their chain so deeply as mine, and scarcely any so *gratefully*. But after reaching this climax in the fifth number, what are you to do with the fifteen that are to follow?—"The wine of life is drawn, and nothing left but the dull dregs for this poor world to brag of." So I should say, and fear for any other adventurer. But I have unbounded trust in your resources, though I have a feeling that you will have nothing in the sequel, if indeed in your whole life, equal to the pathos and poetry, the truth and the tenderness, of the four last pages of this number, for those, at least, who feel and judge like me. I am most anxious and impatient, however, to see how you get on, and begin already to conceive how you may fulfil your formerly incredible prediction, that

I should come to take an interest in Dombey himself. Now, that you have got his stony heart into the terrible crucible of affliction, though I still retain my incredulity as to Miss Tox and the Major, I feel that I (as well as they) am but clay in the hands of the potter, and may be moulded at your will. It is not worth while, perhaps, to go back to the Battle of Life; but I wish to say, that on reading it over a second time, I was so charmed with the sweet writing and generous sentiments, as *partly* to forget the faults of the story, and to feel that if you had had time and space enough to develope and bring out your conception, you must probably have disarmed most of your censors. But the general voice, I fancy, persists in refusing it a place among your best pieces. This Dombey, however, will set all right, and make even the envious and jealous ashamed of saying anything against you.

But I forget to thank you for your most kind and interesting letter of December 27th. I certainly did not mean to ask you for the full and clear, if not every way satisfactory, statement you have trusted me with. But I do feel the full value of that confidence, and wish I had any better return to make to it than mere thanks, and idle, because general, advice. I am rather disappointed, I must own, at finding your *embankment* still so small. But it is a great thing to have made a beginning, and laid a foundation; and you are young enough to reckon on living many years under the proud roof of the com-

pleted structure, which even I expect to see ascending in its splendour. But when I consider that the public has, upon a moderate computation, paid at least £100,000 for your works (and had a good bargain too at the money), it is rather provoking to think that the author should not now have ——— in bank, and have never received, I suspect, above ———. There must have been some mismanagement, I think, as well as ill-luck, to have occasioned this result—not extravagance on your part, my dear Dickens—nor even excessive beneficence—but improvident arrangements with publishers—and too careless a control of their proceedings. But you are wiser now; and, with Foster's kind and judicious help, will soon redeem the effects of your not ungenerous errors. I am as far as possible from grudging you the elegances and indulgences which are suitable to your tasteful and liberal nature, and which you have so fully earned; and should indeed be grieved not to see you surrounded, and your children growing up, in the midst of the refinements, which not only gratify the relishes, but improve the capacities, of a cultivated mind. All I venture to press on you is the infinite importance, and unspeakable comfort, of an achieved and secure *independence*; taking away all anxiety about decay of health or mental alacrity, or even that impatience of task work which is apt to steal upon free spirits who would work harder and better, if redeemed from the yoke of necessity. But this is twaddle enough, and

must be charitably set down to the score of my paternal anxiety and senile caution.

How funny that *besoin* of yours for midnight rambling in city streets, and how curious that Macaulay should have the same taste or fancy. If I thought there was any such inspiration as yours to be caught by the practice, I should expose my poor irritable *trachea*, I think, to a nocturnal pilgrimage without scruple. But I fear I should have my venture for my pains. I wish I had time to discuss the grounds and *extent* of my preference of your soft and tender characters, to the humorous and grotesque; but I can only say now, that I am as far as possible from undervaluing the merit, and even the charm, of the latter; only it is a lower and more imitable style. I have always thought Quilp and Swiveller great marvels of art; and yet I should have admired the last far less, had it not been for his redeeming gratitude to the Marchioness, and that inimitable convalescent repast, with his hand locked in hers, and her *tears* of delight. If you will only own that you are prouder of that scene, than of any of his antecedent fantasticals, I shall be satisfied with the conformity of our judgments. And so God bless you, and your dear Kate, and my charming boy, and all his brothers and sisters, and all whom you love, and love you—with you, or at a distance. I have been pretty well all this winter, and better, I think, on the whole, than last year. So that I hope to be able to go south in spring, and to see you early in April. Char-

lotte is quite well, and all my grandchildren, of whom the little delicate fairy one is still with us, and sometimes brings me rather painfully in mind of your poor little Paul—both from her fragility, and strong old-fashioned affectionate sagacity. But she is improving in health, and I hope will not re-enact that sweet tragedy amongst us. Give my kind love to Kate, and do not let her forget me. Name me too sometimes to the boy. And so, my dear Dickens, ever very affectionately yours.

P.S.—Hariet Brown is here now, and much flattered by your remembrance of her. Will you not come and have another *tête à tête* in the rumble? Do think of it for next summer.

187.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, 31st January 1847.

Bless you, great and small, and all that are dear to you—near at hand or far off. Your Friday letters not yet come.

5½.—Here are your letters. But here is Uncle John and Harry; and now dinner—and so.

7.—Very nice parched haddock, and loin of roast pork from Rossie, with apple sauce and tomata.—Very well;—but you take my warning about Prince Arthur* too seriously. I am sure you will do what is right and kind, and nothing else. But I think the chances are against him, and that it will be

* A nephew of Mr. Empson.

long enough before he gets £800 a-year in England, or be as rich at the end of the next ten years by staying here as by going there, however small the riches may be either way. But there is a Providence to whom the shaping of our ends must be left after all, and in whom I am for putting trust cheerfully. Only teach him habits of economy and self-denial, which are the humble elements of proud independence, and I doubt not he will do very well. I return you your letters and ——— Stephens to me, though I would withhold it from all but you; both because these barings of the heart should not be shown, except to one's *other self*, and because there are expressions of tenderness and affection for me which it would be vainglorious in me to exhibit in any other quarter. But you will not so judge, nor doubt me, when I say that I was as much surprised as gratified by those expressions, which I had called out by only a few words of simple and hearty sympathy with his late affliction, and of regard for himself. There is something very touching in his fond and partial account of the poor boy,—though he probably gave you something like it when you saw him. I am better to-day, and have had a walk with Harriet Brown and by myself. A snow shower in the morning, but the day bright; thermometer 33, and a glorious sunset.

188.—*To Mrs. Fletcher.*

Shanklin, Isle of Wight,
Tuesday, 20th April 1847.

My ever dear Mrs. Fletcher—

. . . . . .

I would have run up to Ryde, and crossed the stormy water to look once more on your affectionate eyes, and hear the kind throb of your long remembered voice. But I dare not venture as it is, and can only say God bless you ever.

I did not get your kind note till it was too late to answer it by the post of yesterday. We are all very well here, but the poor patriarch who is telling you so—though he is generally in no very compassionate state, and has every reason to be gratified by the prompt and never-failing kindness of those about him, and is sometimes, he fears, rather flattered by the veneration with which he is treated, as the Methuselah of the family, by the imps of the third generation. We have got a very nice house here with a pretty lawn sloping down before it; over the shrubs of which, and the tufts of wood beyond, we have two separate peeps of the blue and lonely sea. The village is very small and scattery, all mixed up with trees, and lying among sweet airy falls and swells of ground, which finally rise up behind to breezy downs 800 feet high, and sink down in front to the edge of the varying cliffs, which overhang a pretty beach of fine sand, and are approachable by a very striking wooded ravine which

they call the *Chine*. I wish you could have come here and enjoyed the rural solitude and air of sweet repose which is the chief charm of the place in my eyes. I hope you have had a pleasant meeting with Mrs. Taylor, to whom I beg to be kindly remembered. To Mary I will not send less than my love. We shall stay here till 3d or 4th May, and then go for a week to Hayleybury again before starting for the north. Is there no chance of our meeting before we put the Border between us? At all events, let me know the plan of your summer campaign. I shall be in quarters at Craigcrook, I believe, from May till November; and so with entire respect, and what is much better, most true love, believe me always, my dear Mrs. Fletcher, very affectionately yours.

189.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Craigcrook, Sunday, 23d May 1847.

Bless you ever! and this is my first, right earnest, tranquil, Sunday blessing, since my return; for, the day after my arrival, I was in a worry with heaps of unanswered letters, and neglected arrangements. But to-day I have got back to my old Sabbath feeling of peace, love, and seclusion. Granny has gone to church, and the babes and doggies are out walking; and I have paced leisurely round my garden, to the songs of hundreds of hymning blackbirds and thrushes, and stepped stately along my terrace, among the bleaters in the lawn below, and possessed my heart in quietness, and felt that there was sweetness in

solitude, and that the world, whether to be left, or to be yet a while lived in, is a world to be loved, and only to be enjoyed by those who find objects of love in it. And this is the sum of the matter; and the first, and last, and only enduring condition of all good people, when their fits of vanity and ambition are off them, or finally sinking to repose. Well, but here has been Tarley, come, of her own sweet will, to tell me, with a blush and a smile, and ever so little of a stammer, that she would like if I would walk with her; and we have been walking, hand in hand, down to the bottom of the quarry, where the water is growing, though slowly, and up to the Keith's sweet-briar alley, very sweet and resonant with music of birds, and rich with cowslips and orchis; and over the style back to our own domains; and been sitting in the warm corner by the gardener's house, and taking cognisance of the promise of gooseberries and currants, of which we are to have pies, I think, next week; and gazing at the glorious brightness of the gentians, and the rival brightness of the peacock's neck; and discoursing of lambs and children, and goodness and happiness, and their elements and connections. Less discussion, though, than usual, in our Sunday Tusculans, and more simple chat, as from one friend to another. And now she has gone to sharpen her teeth for dinner, and tell Ali as much as she likes of our disceptations; and I come back to my letter. We met the boy and Ali early in our ramble, and he took my other hand for a while; but Ali would not trust him in the quarry, and so we

parted—on the brink of perdition—and he roared lustily at sight of our peril. You beat us terribly as to weather still; for last night was positively cold with us, ther. at midnight down to 44, and a keen, clear, sharp-looking sky. To-day it has not yet been above 50, and there are but scanty sun-gleams. All which forebodes, if it does not ensure, a late harvest, which will this year be as great a calamity as a scanty one, which it is likely enough to be also. I fear the most of the mortality from famine; and pestilence is still to come even for this year; and it is too painful to think of. I persist in my early rising, and am down at breakfast every morning at 9½; so that you had better be putting yourselves in training, if you mean, as I hope you do, to join with me in the rites of that national meal. I rather think, too, that I am better than my average at Shanklin; though I do not ascribe this either to these virtuous exertions, or the sanitary influence of my court work, and should be at a loss, indeed, to point out any specific amendment. A line from Harriet Brown this morning: all very well.

190.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Craigcrook, Sunday, 1st June 1847.

All as well here as yesterday, and all joining in Sunday's blessings on you, and all that is near and dear to you. And is not this enough for a Sunday letter? and a good example—a pattern for you, when you are pleased to soothe and cheer us with your pencillings? I have really very little else to tell

you. It was showery this morning, so that Tarley and I had not our usual tête-à-tête ramble. But we had a long and pleasant confabulation, notwithstanding, in which I initiated her into the mysteries of numeration, and pretty well taught her the forms as well as the names of all the cyphers, from 1 to 10, with which she was much interested; and after that we had a disputation on the uses and pleasures of reading, and of the good and object of going to church, though I confined my views chiefly to the *moral* rather than to the religious effects.*

After Mam. returned I read an hour, with much and deep interest, in Arnold's Life and Letters. He must have been a noble fellow, though even he could never have made the system of our public schools other than most mischievous. I wish to heaven I had had the pleasure of knowing him, and hope I may yet, where there will be no doubt about creeds, and no real disagreement among good people. After it cleared up, we all walked together towards Lauriston, &c.

A great man has fallen in Israel! Poor Chalmers was found dead in his bed yesterday morning. He had preached the day before, and sat up rather late preparing to make an important statement in Free Church General Assembly that very day. He was, I think, a great and a good man; and the most simple, natural, and unassuming religionist I have

* This dear child died on the 4th of August 1850, aged twelve, having survived her grandfather, who would probably not have survived her so long, about six months.

ever known. I am very sorry that I shall hear his voice no more.—Ever yours.

191.—*To Mrs. A. Rutherfurd.*

Craigcrook, Monday, 21st June 1847.

My ever dear Sophia—You cannot write a stupid letter if you tried. But I shall shew you that I can, and without any extraordinary effort either, as appeareth by this following. I have no news to tell you, and no gossip, nor scandal. Our weather has been summerish of late, but never quite summer. The thermometer seldom up to 60, and many showers. But we are very green and blossomy, and what we hermits call very beautiful. More fastidious people would say this of Lauriston, which was never in greater glory, though a glory I fear the first flush and freshness of which will have departed before you can see it. We have trespassed on its enchanted solitude several times of late, and I have enjoyed several lonely and stately pacings along your terrace, in the company of thoughts which did no wrong to its absent mistress. I need not say that we miss you, nor even that we miss no one so much, or that there is no one left whom we should miss so much if he (or she) were to go. Well, but you are coming back, and though midsummer is already past, you will bring brightness and warmth to arrest the chilling of the year.

This you must know is our sweet Maggie's birthday. Six pleasant years being over, during which

she has blossomed (through all seasons) by our side, and been all that time the light of our eyes, and the love of our hearts. We have piled up a great bonfire in her honour, round which the other children, with Maggie Rutherfurd and her brother (who have been much with us of late) are to dance and sing, when it is lighted after dinner; and we have also hung out a great flag on our topmost tower, which is waving proudly in the wind, and announcing to all the country that this is a day of festival and genial wishes with all who live under its shadow. Does your London finery arm itself with a disdainful smile at our poor village holidaying? Never mind;—one fête in the long run is pretty much as good as another, and the best perhaps is that which gives the least trouble.

I am glad you are well, and expect to be much interested and egayé by the little bits of your London experiences, with which I reckon on your entrusting me when we get within whispering distance of each other once more. How long it does seem since you went, and how short my look forward now is, to the day when we must part for a longer time! I am very tolerably well though, and not a bit more alarmed at the prospect than the six-year old of the day, and the young band that is to celebrate that small anniversary. We expect the residuary Empsons in the first week of July, and fear they will then be soon enough to welcome your return. They leave for here about the 28th, but are to stop a week in Yorkshire with his relations.

The Cockburns seem very happy with their Indian revenant George and his little wife, who is about to produce a new grandchild for them, &c.

And so, God bless you, my dear, and send you soon back to your loving friends, and your own quiet, pure, and innocent shades! Have I kept my word with you? and sent you a nice bit of amiable twaddle, and all quite naturally.

Charlotte is down at the sea with the children. We have three female Moreheads here with us—all very agreeable, and one very sick, but I hope on the way of recovery.—Ever and ever affectionately yours.

192.—*To a Grandchild.*

Craigcrook, 21st June 1847.

A high day! and a holiday! the longest and the brightest of the year! the very middle day of the summer—and the very day when Maggie first opened her sweet eyes on the light! Bless you ever, my darling, and bonny bairn. You have now blossomed beside us for six pleasant years, and been all that time the light of our eyes, and the love of our hearts, —at first the cause of some tender fears from your weakness and delicacy—then of some little provocation, from your too great love, as we thought, of your own will and amusement—but now only of love and admiration for your gentle obedience to your parents, and your sweet yielding to the wishes of your younger sister and brother. God bless and keep you then for ever, my delightful and ever im-

proving child, and make you, not only gay and happy, as an angel without sin and sorrow, but meek and mild, like that heavenly child, who was once sent down to earth for our example.

Well, the sun is shining brightly on our towers and trees, and the great bonfire is all piled up and ready to be lighted, when we come out after drinking your health at dinner; and we have got a great blue and yellow flag hung out on the tower, waving proudly in the wind, and telling all the country around, that this is a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving, and wishes of happiness, with all who live under its shadow. And the servants are all to have a fine dinner, and wine and whisky to drink to your health, and all the young Christies (that is the new gardener's children) will be taught to repeat your name with blessings; and, when they are drawn up round the bonfire, will wonder a little, I daresay, what sort of a creature this Miss Maggie can be, that we are making all this fuss about! and so you must take care, when you come, to be good enough, and pretty enough, to make them understand why we all so love and honour you.

Frankie and Tarley have been talking a great deal about you this morning already, and Granny is going to take them and Maggie Rutherfurd and her brother down to the sea at Cramond—that they may tell the fishes and the distant shores what a happy and a hopeful day it is to them, and to us all. And so bless you again, my sweet one, for this and all future years. Think kindly of one who thinks always

of you; and believe, that of all who love you, there is none who has loved you better or longer, or more constantly, than your loving Grandpa.

193.—*To the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.*

Craigcrook, Thursday Evening,
1st July 1847.

My dear Lord Provost—My health will not allow me to be at your meeting;* but there will be no one there more truly anxious for its success.

I must confess, however, that it was a great mortification to me, and will ever be a cause of regret, that it should have been found necessary thus to set on foot a new association for carrying into effect the objects which I certainly understood to have been contemplated in Mr. Guthrie's beautiful and admirable appeal, and that I was not in the least prepared for those recent proceedings of the committees to which their promotion was intrusted, by which (whatever may have been intended) it is now apparent and undeniable that a large and very necessitous portion of those for whom such schools were required, will be practically excluded from the benefit of them.

I cannot and do not presume to question the per-

* A public meeting of the subscribers to the Original Ragged School; called for the purpose of having it clearly ascertained, whether it was true that the establishment was to be so exclusively Protestant that, practically, Roman Catholic children would not be allowed, or could not be expected, to attend it. The result was the erection of that admirable institution, *The United Industrial School.*

fect purity of the motives by which such men as Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Sheriff Spiers, and their many excellent associates, must have been actuated; nor can I doubt that, under their management, much good will still be effected, though in a far narrower field than that which I expected to see profiting by their zeal, wisdom, and charity. I do not repent, therefore, in any degree, that I had placed a moderate subscription in their hands, before I was aware of the partial disappointment that was impending; and I do not mean or wish to withdraw any part of that subscription.

But when I find men so eminently liberal, conscientious, and judicious, unable to devise any plan for so combining religious with secular instruction, as to avoid offending and alienating others as liberal, conscientious, and judicious as themselves, I must say that I am confirmed and *rivetted* in the conviction I have long entertained, that no such combination is possible in the public teaching or administration of any school to be supported by the public at large, or by contributions from all classes of the community; and hold, indeed, the same principle to apply to all endowments or grants in aid of such schools, by the general government of the country. In so far as they are public or general schools, to which the children of all communions are entitled and invited to resort, I think they should aim only at imparting secular instruction, and that their ordinary teachers should meddle with nothing beyond.

It will not, I trust, be inferred from this, that I

think lightly of the importance, or indeed question the absolute necessity, of early religious instruction. On the contrary, I am decidedly of opinion that no merely intellectual training would be of any value without it, and might often, indeed, be positively pernicious; and so deep is my conviction on this point, that I should not object to see it made *imperative* on the parents (or patrons) of all the children sent to these schools, to show that adequate provision had been made for their training in religious knowledge and feelings. But the difference between this and that secular information to which I would confine the general or public teaching, is, that the latter may be best given in common, and at one and the same time, to all who stand in need of it; while the other can never be given, either in peace or with effect, except to each sect or communion of religionists apart.

Why this should be so, or how it should have proved so impracticable to contrive some system of Christian instruction so elementary, and so pure from topics of controversy, as to be acceptable to all who are Christians, is not for me to explain. But it is enough that every day's experience, and the proceedings that have led to the present meeting, afford *absolute demonstration* of the fact. And it is upon this conviction that the experiment of keeping the two kinds of instruction entirely separate, and undertaking only the secular department in the public schools, is, as I understand, to be recommended to the meeting.

In this recommendation I most cordially and earnestly concur; and cannot but hope that, if wisely conducted, it may set an example which the growing conviction of reflecting and observing men will soon cause to be followed in every quarter of the land.

I take the liberty of annexing a draft for £25, as my present contribution to the undertaking.—And am always, my dear Lord Provost, very faithfully yours.

194.—*To Mr. Charles Dickens.*

Craigcrook, Blackhall, Edinburgh,
Monday, 5th July 1847.

My ever dear Dickens—You know I am your *Critic Laureate;* and, by rights, should present you with a birthday offering, on the appearance of every new number. But your births come so fast, that my poor hobbling chronicle cannot keep up with them; and you are far more prolific of bright inventions than I can afford to be of dull remarks. But I thank you, and bless you, not the less (internally) for every new benefaction, and feel that I must thank you this time in words, even though it should tire you; for I am always afraid of falling somewhat out of your remembrance; or rather, perhaps, of your fancying that I am getting too old and stupid to relish and value you as I ought; but, indeed, I am not, and am, in every way, quite as worthy of your remembrance as ever.

I cannot tell you how much I have been charmed

with your last number, and what gentle sobs and delightful tears it has cost me. It is the most finished, perhaps, in diction; and in the delicacy and fineness of its touches, both of pleasantry and pathos, of any you have ever given us; while it rises to higher and deeper passions; not resting, like most of the former, in sweet thoughtfulness, and thrilling and attractive tenderness, but boldly wielding all the lofty and terrible elements of tragedy, and bringing before us the appalling struggles of a proud, scornful, and repentant spirit. I am proud that you should thus shew us new views of your genius—but I shall always love its gentler magic the most; and never leave Nelly and Paul and Florence for Edith, with whatever potent spells you may invest her; though I am prepared for great things from her. I must thank you, too, for the true and pathetic *poetry* of many passages in this number—Dombey's brief vision in the after dinner table, for instance, and that grand and solemn progress, so full of fancy and feeling, of dawn and night shadows, over the funeral church. I am prepared too, in some degree, for being softened towards Dombey; for you *have* made me feel sincere pity for Miss Tox; though, to be sure, only by making her the victim of a still more hateful and heartless creature than herself; and I do not know where you are to find anything more hateful and heartless than Dombey. For all I have yet seen, it should only require to see him insulted, beggared, and disgraced.

Perhaps I hate Carker even more, already; so much, indeed, that it would be a relief to me if you could do without him. And I must tell you, too, that I think him the least natural of all the characters you have ever exhibited (for I do not consider Quilp, or Dick Swiveller, as at all out of nature); but it seems to me that a Knight Templar in the disguise of a waiter, is not a more extravagant fiction, than a man of high gifts and rare accomplishments, bred and working hard every day as a subordinate manager or head clerk in a merchant's counting-house. One might pass his extreme wickedness and malignity, though they, too, are quite above his position; but the genius and attainments, the manners and scope of thought, do strike me as not reconcileable with anything one has yet heard of his history, or seen of his occupations. But I must submit, I see, to take a great interest in him, and only hope you will not end by making me love him too.

Well; but how have you been? And how is the poor child who was so cruelly hustled against the portals of life at his entry? And his dear mother? And my bright boy? And all the rest of the happy circle? And where are you now? And where to be for the summer? And will you not come to see us here (where we shall be constantly with the Empsons, after to-morrow, I hope till October, and after that by ourselves till November)? And how does the People's Edition prosper? And how does *the embankment* proceed? And do

you begin to feel the germs of a prudent avarice, and anticipated pride of purse, working themselves into your breast? And whom do you mostly live with? or wish to live with? And among whom, and in what condition, do you most aspire to die? Though I am not exactly your father confessor, you know I always put you through your Catechism; and I do expect and require an answer to all these interrogatives.

I have been tolerably well since I saw you, though a little more disordered than usual for the last fortnight. However, we have our long holidays after the 20th; and I expect my daughter, with the rest of my grandchildren (we brought two down with us) to-morrow, or next day. We have had quite a cool summer, but are now looking very green and leafy, and with roses in my garden as I should be quite proud to crown you with. But here are people come in upon me, and I have no hope of getting rid of them before the post goes. So God bless you! my dear Dickens; and with truest love to my true-hearted Kate, and all true Dickenses, believe me, always, ever and ever yours.

195.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Craigcrook, Blackhall,
Sunday, 12th September 1847.

My dear Dickens—I have had a horrid *phlegmon* on my cheek, which, after keeping me in a sleepless fever for a full week, was savagely cut into only four

days ago, and is not quite cured yet. Nothing else could have kept back my little laureate offering on your last happy birth, and my thanks for all the pleasure it has given, and all the good it has done me. That first chapter, and the scenes with *Florence* and *Edith*, are done with your finest and happiest hand; so soft and so graceful, and with such delicate touches of deep feeling, and passing intimations of coming griefs, and woman's loveliness, and loving nature, shown in such contrasted embodiments of gentle innocence and passionate pride; and yet all brought under the potent spell of one great master, and harmonized by the grace as well as the power of his genius, into a picture in which every one must recognise, not only the truth of each individual figure, but the magic effect of their grouping. You have the force and the nature of Scott in his pathetic parts, without his occasional coarseness and wordiness; and the searching disclosure of inward agonies of Byron, without a trait of his wickedness.

Well, now, but what are you going to do? Somebody was saying the other day, that you were expected in Scotland; but I think you would not have withheld so pleasant a piece of information from me, if you had had it to give. Yet you did tell me something about a possible dinner at Glasgow; and the season cannot be said to be yet over. At all events, let me know.

My daughter and her children (all but my own adopted one) leave us, I grieve to say, in a few days; and after that, we who are left may go for a week

into Ayrshire, to divert our *delaissement;* but, after that, we shall be steadily here till November, and I am sure I need not say how glad I shall be to see you. I am still but weak and washy; and feel that it is no light thing for an old gentleman to have a great hole dug in his cheek, with a hard swelling round it, as large as a cross-bun at Easter. The truth is, I fear, that I am very old; and a little thing unsettles, and a little more will overthrow, me. And yet my low sun looks lovingly on the world it is leaving, and will sink gently, I hope, and rather in brightness than gloom.

God bless you, and all who are dear to you!—Ever and ever, my dear Dickens, affectionately yours.

196.—*To Mrs. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Friday Night,
7th November 1847.

Here we are, banished (for a season) from our Paradise, and feeling as Adam and Eve did, the first night they passed in the lower world. I certainly was never so sorry to part from my shades, and never left them so lovely, or so entire, &c.

Well, we came in with sweet Maggie and the birds, just about sunset, and the town looked dark and *wicked.* Your Wednesday letters were our best consolation, and the thought that we should now get them more regularly and earlier.

We left Lady Bell at Craigcrook, waiting for Sophy Rutherfurd to take her to Lauriston, where

there is to be a great dinner to Lord John, Lord James Stewart, and others. Granny and I dined quietly in our duality, and cheered up comfortably enough, at our repast, and over the *resumé* of all our old town divertisements with Maggie, who was bright as an angel, and as happy. We had the play of the red sofa cushion child, and the shadows on the wall, and the wilful mistake of poet Gay for Sir Walter, and the identification of all the handmaidens in the figures of the large pictures over the chimney, besides tossing and dancing, till Buckley came to impose silence on our revels. Granny has not slept any, and I only mused with my head covered, on the sofa. Then we had tea gaily, and some pleasant chat, till I happened to go up stairs, and passing into our room, saw the door open of that little one where *you* used to sleep, and the very bed waiting there for you, so silent and desolate, that all the love, and the *miss* of you, which fell so sadly on my heart the first night of your desertion, came back upon it so heavily and darkly, that I was obliged to shut myself in, and cry over the recollection, as if all the interval had been annihilated, and *that* loss and sorrow were still fresh and unsubdued before me; and though the fit went off before long, I feel still that I must vent my heart by telling you of it, and therefore sit down now to write all this to you, and get rid of feelings that would otherwise be more likely to haunt my vigils of the night. It will not give you pain, I think, to hear of it; for the pain is over, long over. with me, and you know that I have

no regrets now, nor anything but self-gratulations, and a deep and soothing conviction, to which every day adds strength, that what has been, and is, is best and happiest for all of us, and in all respects what we should have wished and prayed for, except only for the engagements which keep us so much asunder. But recollections will arise, and scenes rush back on the heart, which can only be charmed back to repose by unburdening itself to hearts that understand it; and now the spell has done its work, and I return to the common world.

197.—*To Mrs. Fletcher.*

Craigcrook, Thursday 18th, 1847.

My dear Mrs. Fletcher—Your kind letter of the 12th did not reach Hayleybury till we were across the Border, and was only forwarded to me last night, &c.

I am very much interested about what you tell me of the early days of poor Allen, and wish I could repay you by any accounts you would care about of his latter days. His life, I have no doubt, on the whole was a happy one, and blameless and amiable. Kind and ever generous in his nature, though somewhat cold, and, in appearance, only *intellectual;* in his manners and views he enjoyed the respect of all men, and the cordial esteem and confidence of all to whom he was intimately known. I did dine with Lady Holland within four days of his death, when there had been an apparent improvement in his symptoms,

and she indulged in sanguine hopes of his recovery. He had undertaken to make a review of Horner's book, but had made but little progress beyond reading it carefully, and making a few notes on the points on which he thought of making observations, &c.

When I said that I had no anecdotes to tell you of Allen, I had forgotten that you might not have heard of his request to be buried at Ampthill, and the motive of it. When the Hollands lost a very sweet young girl, many years ago, Allen was very deeply afflicted, as she had always been a favourite, and a sort of pupil, and never went afterwards with the family to Ampthill without going and sitting alone for an hour in the vault where she was laid; and it was in an adjoining vault, which he had constructed at the time, that he ultimately directed his own body to be placed. He also gave white frocks and black ribbons to twenty young girls of the neighbourhood, such as he had dressed and marshalled to assist at her funeral. I think you will like to hear this of your old friend, who had grown very unlike "a young Greek" certainly, and had the air, to most people, of a very unromantic person. I cannot tell you how much we all miss you from our neighbourhood, and how much we secretly cherish a hope that you may in time come to think Edinburgh a fitter place (in winter, at least) than the windy vales of Westmoreland. But I am busy to-day, and can only say, ever very affectionately yours.

198.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Saturday, 26th —— (1848).

What the devil are we *to believe* about this new French revolution? nothing but electric telegraphs subsequent to Guizot's resignation, and no information by whom the messages are sent, or how they come. I give no absolute credit, therefore, to anything said to have happened since, and positively disbelieve a great part of it. But *there is a revolution*, I take it, and France certainly, and the continent most probably, and England not improbably, are in for a new period of convulsion! It is scarcely possible, I fear, that things should settle down this time as quietly as they did in 1830; and though one must rejoice, in the first instance, at the failure of this insane assertion of arbitrary power, and even at the downfall of a government which has been gradually verging towards illiberal and despotic principles, I cannot say that I augur anything but evil (in the first instance at least, and to the liberal party in this country) from this outbreak. An example of successful democratic insurrections against regular authority are feared and eschewed by the timid, the cautious, and, generally speaking, by the prudent, moderate, and comfortabler classes among us; and these in peaceful times must always be the leading classes, and, in truth, the only *safe* leaders at any time; and it would require a far greater outrage than that of suppressing the banquets, &c. to make this class in any way tolerant of mobs breaking into

senate houses and palaces—burning the fine furniture, and parading the vacated throne in mockery about the streets—and still less of a sudden proclamation of the abolition of monarchy, and the adoption of a full democracy. And so, though I do not think we shall join in a new holy alliance for the restoration of legitimate sovereignty by foreign bayonets, I do expect that conservation will again be in the ascendant, and all advance in liberal or popular legislation arrested, or pushed back among us for a long time, by the alarm and repugnance that this coarse triumph of a Parisian populace will excite. The whole affair is nearly as much a mystery to me as ever; but I now incline to believe that the ultimate catastrophe is to be ascribed rather to the *relenting* of old Louis P. than to his being actually overmastered—my theory being that he reckoned (most foolishly and GUILTILY, when there was any risk at all) on his vast force deterring the discontented from any actual resistance; and that when he found they could only be got under (when joined by the National Guard) by a sanguinary conflict, he shrank from butchering 10,000 or 20,000 of his subjects by his regular army; and though probably quite sure of ultimately gaining a complete and bloody victory, thought it better, when brought to this dreadful alternative, rather to try the effect of compassion, or even submission, than go to an issue under which the most complete success must have made Paris uninhabitable for him or his descendants, and himself an object of loathing and deserved

infamy to all succeeding generations. He has probably failed in the attempt to compromise, but even then, I would fain hope has not repented the resolution, at all events, to avoid that savage effusion of blood; and with that resolution, I do trust that his conquerors, if indeed he is conquered, will sympathize with and copy him. It also strikes me that this furious outbreak is truly to be traced to the want of that very electoral reform which its authors were so unwisely baffled in seeking by other means—it being but one more example of the general truth, that in all intelligent communities, public opinion, if refused its legitimate vents, will burst its way through the close system of the government; but here, luckily for you, is dinner. Good bye.

7½.—It is very foolish writing up this to you from the provinces; but it is difficult to think of anything else, and I must write to you all that I am thinking. Granny writes also, however, and will supply the domestic chapter. Not out of court till four, Saturday though it be. A good large party last night. All our snow gone, and weather vernal again, though not quite so fine as you make yours. Heaven bless you all.—Ever yours.

199.—*To Mrs. A. Rutherfurd.*

Hayleybury, Friday, May 1848.

My ever dear Sophia—I write to you with a heavier heart than ever I did before.* But it helps

* Mrs. Jeffrey was very ill.

to lighten it that I am sure of your sympathy, and perhaps I take a gloomier view of our position than is reasonable. Bright came last night. He thinks the disease still progressing, though slowly, but is satisfied that the cure must now be a work of time; and therefore thinks it better that she should make an effort to go to Craigcrook at once, rather than wait till moving might be less safe, and staying here indefinitely liable to many objections; and is of opinion that no material hurt can come of her now going, either by easy railway stages, or by water, and I think we have now pretty much fixed that she shall go by sea next Wednesday evening, either with her own maid and good motherly White to help her, or with White, and Maggie, and Mrs. Buckley, while I go by train the same morning, either with Maggie and Buckley, or with the three other children and their mother and maids, leaving poor Empson to follow alone, when his holidays will let him, about a fortnight after.

The last scheme is most in favour to-day, and would certainly be most agreeable to us all except for its unfairness to E., who is too kind and generous to say anything against it. But one way or another, if no new impediment arises, I think there will be a move to the north next Wednesday, and would to heaven it were well over, for I cannot yet contemplate it and the temporary separation it implies without great anxiety. I was resolved at first to embark with C., but she was earnest against it, and the recollection of my liability to sinking and

faintness on any violent intestinal disturbance, has made me feel that the experiment of encountering sea-sickness would be too rash, and might frighten and disturb poor C. more than my poor presence could comfort her; and, with two attendants, I do trust that she will be at least as well off as if I was with her. We of the train will stop a night at Carlisle, and be home to prepare for the voyagers.

The poor patient bears up as yet delightfully, and I hope her charming constitutional cheerfulness will still remain with her, though she is a little low by fits already, and often, I fear, uncomfortable. But they talk of long courses of mercury, &c., and I dread she has much to go through. She is perfectly aware that she may have a long confinement, &c., but I do not think reckons on much suffering, and seems to make no question of an ultimate recovery, and of course we take care not to frighten her.

This is very sad, and almost unfair to you, my dear Sophia. But you see how I lean on your indulgence. I am myself tolerably well, though those things do me no good. I shall probably write again before we actually start. All the rest are well, and so God bless you always my dear, and believe me ever and ever yours.

200.—*To a Grandchild.*

Craigcrook, 20th June 1848.

My sonsy Nancy!—I love you very much, and think very often of your dimples, and your pimples;

and your funny little plays, and all your pretty ways; and I send you my blessing, and wish I were kissing, your sweet rosy lips, or your fat finger tips; and that you were here, so that I could hear, your stammering words, from a mouthful of curds; and a great purple tongue (as broad as it's long); and see your round eyes, open wide with surprise, and your wondering look, to find yourself at Craigcrook! To-morrow is Maggie's *birthday*, and we have built up a great bonfire in honour of it; and Maggie Rutherfurd (do you remember her at all?) is coming out to dance round it; and all the servants are to drink her health, and wish her many happy days with you and Frankie; and all the mammys and pappys, whether grand or not grand. We are very glad to hear that she and you love each other so well, and are happy in making each other happy; and that you do not forget dear Tarley or Frankie, when they are out of sight, nor Granny either—or even old Granny pa, who is in most danger of being forgotten, he thinks. We have had showery weather here, but the garden is full of flowers; and Frankie has a new wheel-barrow, and does a great deal of work, and *some mischief* now and then. All the dogs are very well; and Foxey is mine, and Froggy is Tarley's, and Frankie has taken up with great white Neddy—so that nothing is left for Granny but old barking Jacky and Dover when the carriage comes. The donkey sends his compliments to you, and maintains that you are a cousin of his! or a near relation, at all events. He wishes, too, that you and Maggie

would come, for he thinks that you will not be so heavy on his back as Tarley and Maggie Rutherfurd, who now ride him without mercy. This is Sunday, and Ali is at church—Granny and I taking care of Frankie till she comes back, and he is now hammering very busily at a corner of the carpet, which he says does not lie flat. He is very good, and really too pretty for a boy, though I think his two eyebrows are growing into one—stretching and meeting each other above his nose! But he has not near so many *freckles* as Tarley—who has a very fine crop of them—which she and I encourage as much as we can. I hope you and Maggie will lay in a stock of them, as I think no little girl can be pretty without them in summer. Our pea-hens are suspected of having young families in some hidden place, for though they pay us short visits now and then, we see them but seldom, and always alone. If you and Maggie were here with your sharp eyes, we think you might find out their secret, and introduce us to a nice new family of young peas. The old papa cock, in the meantime, says he knows nothing about them, and does not care a farthing! We envy you your young peas of another kind, for we have none yet, nor any asparagus either, and hope you will bring some down to us in your lap. Tarley sends her love, and I send mine to you all; though I shall think most of Maggie to-morrow morning, and of you when your birth morning comes. When is that, do you know? It is never dark now here, and we might all go to bed without candles. And so bless

you ever and ever, my dear dimply pussie.—Your very loving Grandpa.

201.—*To Mr. Empson.*

(On receiving a proof of part of Macaulay's History.)

Craigcrook, Sunday.

. . . . . .

But I have your nice Friday letter with its precious enclosure, which I have devoured with a greedy and epicurean relish. I think it not only good, but admirable. It is as fluent and as much coloured as Livy; as close and coherent as Thucydides; with far more real condensation, and a larger thoughtfulness than either; and quite free from the affected laconisms and sarcasms and epigrams of Tacitus. I do not know that I ever read any thing so good as the first forty pages; so clear, comprehensive and concise, so pregnant with deep thought, so suggestive of great views, and grand and memorable distinctions. What follows about the effects of the Reformation, and the circumstances which really gave its peculiar (and I have always thought mongrel) character to the Church of England, though full of force and originality, and indispensable to the development of his subject, are, to me, less attractive, and seem somewhat to encumber and retard the grand march on which he had begun. But he will soon emerge from that entanglement, and fall into the full force of his first majestic movement. I shall send back these sheets to the Albany to-

morrow, unseen, certainly, by any eye but my own. I suppose they are already thrown off, or I would suggest the alteration of two or three words and some amendment of the *punctuation*, &c.

. . . . . .

I have been looking into Sir W. Hamilton's edition of Reid, or rather into one of his own annexed dissertations "On the Philosophy of Common Sense;" which, though it frightens one with the *immensity* of its erudition, has struck me very much by its vigour, completeness, and inexorable march of ratiocination. He is a wonderful fellow, and I hope may yet be spared to astonish and overawe us for years to come. Do look into that paper, and make Jones look at it, and tell me what you think of it. But I am also reading Bulwer's Lucretia, which is a remarkable work too. You should read it all, but Charley may stop, if she pleases (and I think she will please) at the first volume, which, in so far as I have read, is by far the most pleasing part of the work. I have always thought Bulwer a great artist, and with so much more profound and suggestive remarks than any other novelist, not excepting Sir Walter, though not comparable either to him or Dickens, in genial views and *absolutely true* presentiments of nature, &c.—Ever yours.

202.—*To Mr. Cayley.*

Craigcrook, Tuesday, 8th August 1848.

My very dear Cayley—A great calamity has

fallen on you, and you must bear it.* It will be hard to bear; and you will long feel its bitterness and its weight. But you have duties that must not be deserted, and affections that must be met and cherished, and will turn at last to comfort and soothing. Heaven support and direct you. I cannot tell you how much we have all been afflicted and surprised by this sad intelligence. She was so well, and so full of heart, and hope, and kindness, in that short glimpse we had of her in London in May. And now all that light is extinguished—and so suddenly! I sit up in bed to write this to you, having been confined (and with a good deal of pain) for the last ten days, in consequence of a sharp surgical operation I had to undergo to get rid of an old wen on my leg. But I could not rest last night for thinking of you, and Sir George and all the rest of your house of mourning; and feel that it relieves me to give you this needless assurance of my deep sympathy, and indeed true participation, of your sorrow. Ever since the days, now dim and distant, of our first intimacy at Edinburgh, I have always regarded myself almost as one of your family, and I am sure nobody out of it can feel more constant interest in all of you. You will not consider my writing therefore as an impertinence; I am sure you would not, if you could see into my heart at this moment, and indeed I feel sure that you will not, though I feel too that I can do you no good by writing. But you must let me know, by and by, how you come on; and I

* The death of Mrs. Cayley.

trust that your delicate health has not suffered materially by this shock.

Mrs. Jeffrey is almost well again, though still weak and thin. I have my daughter and all her children with me. They will stay out the summer, and Empson also.—And so God bless you, &c.

203.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Craigcrook, 5th November 1848.

My dear Dickens—We must not grow quite out of acquaintance, if you please! &c.

You have put my name alongside of your own, on a memorable little page, and have solemnly united them again, on the head of a child, who will live, I hope, neither to discredit the one, nor to be ashamed of the other. And so, for the sake even of decent consistency, you must really take a little notice of me now and then, and let me have some account, as of old, of your health and happiness—of your worldly affairs, and your spiritual hopes and experiences—of your literary projects and domestic felicities—your nocturnal walks, and dramatic recreations—of the sale of cheap copies, and the conception of bright originals—of your wife and children; in short, your autumn migrations and winter home—of our last parting, which was more humid than usual, and our next meeting, which, alas, I feel to be more and more uncertain.

We have had a good deal of sickness, though really but very little sorrow, in our home this year.

But we are all better now, and the continued welfare and gaiety of the children and grandchildren should make the grandfather and mother ashamed, if they let themselves be depressed by their own natural infirmities. We make a very good fight against them accordingly, and I hope do not materially depress those around us by the spectacle of our not ungentle decay. I was charmed to find you giving signs of life the other day by an advertisement of a new Christmas book, though I can make but a poor guess at its scope by the ——— title you have given it. You must let me have an early copy, I think, but not if at all inconvenient, or against the wish of the publishers, &c.—Ever affectionately yours.

204.—*To Mr. Empson.*

Edinburgh, Monday, 7 o'clock, 1848.

We had no letter this morning, but suppose nothing worse than your being too late for the Saturday post, which will bring us the *post scriptum* to-morrow afternoon, &c.

It is a superb winter day, bright and calm; and we had a grand and pensive walk from Granton pier to Newhaven—the sea rippling slow and shrill among the pebbles, and the sky majestically hung, all over the west, with rich canopied clouds, of crimson and deep orange.

A very good *Examiner* I think this last. I fancy I should like to read those letters and reliques of old

William Taylor. Is he any relation of Sarah's? There is something very creditable in the extreme frankness with which he and Southey tell each other of their faults; though it makes an odd contrast with the soreness and intolerance with which they both receive any similar intimations from other quarters, &c.

205.—*To Mr. Empson.*

19th January 1849.

I have been reading Sydney's Lectures, which I told you Mrs. Smith had sent me; and have been so much struck with their goodness, cleverness, vivacity, courage, and *substantial modesty*, that I have loudly retracted my former judgment, that they would do him no credit, and ought not to be published. I now think them nearly as good as anything he ever wrote; and far better, and more likely to attract notice, than any of his sermons, or most of his reviews; and have consequently recommended an enlarged impression for general use (she had only printed 100 for private circulation). I am very glad to make this *amende*, and I make it most conscientiously. I had read but a few lectures in *manuscript*, when I formed the unfavourable opinion I expressed to her some years ago; and suppose I must have fallen on bad specimens, though I doubt not I was (too much) guided by a preconceived conviction that dear Sydney had never taken the trouble to master the subject, or any part of it, and merely thrown out to his shallow Albemarle Street auditory a frothed-up

rechauffé of Brown and Stewart, from imperfect and mistaken recollections. I do not yet believe that he took much pains, or fitted himself to grapple with the real difficulties of the subject. But it is surprising how bravely and acutely he has clutched at the substance of most things; and how pleasantly he has evaded, or extricated himself from, most perplexities.

206.—*To John Macpherson Macleod, Esq.*

(Late of the Civil Service, Madras, one of the authors of the Indian Penal Code.)

[Mr. Macleod had sent Lord Jeffrey a copy of a very able pamphlet by him, "On some popular objections to the present Income-Tax," in which he endeavoured to shew that the objections to it, because of its inequality, as applied to temporary and to permanent incomes, were groundless.]

Edinburgh, Thursday Night,
15th February 1849.

My dear M'Leod—I have read your little tractate with very great pleasure and admiration. It is a pattern of precise and vigorous reasonings, beautifully lucid, and delightfully concise. I am proud of it for your sake, and for the confirmation it affords of the opinion I have long held, of your eminent qualifications for this kind of writing, as well as for the hope it suggests that the success it must meet with may tempt you to employ that fine and dexterous hand, on other and more important subjects; for I must tell you that, though you have made a dazzling fence of dialectics, and gained a triumph over the narrow battle array which you have been

pleased to assign to your opponents, I am not satisfied that you have broken their substantive strength, or done more than oblige them to form their old objections anew, on a ground less exposed. I am a desperate heretic, in short, and proclaim myself, not only unconverted, but unshaken in all the substantial articles of that creed, on *one formula* of which you have made so brilliant an assault. But I despair of being able to render you a reason for my belief, till I have more leisure for such an exposition, than I can venture to hope for, for some time to come. My first movement was merely to thank you for your book, and to tell you how charmingly I thought it written, as soon as I had done reading it. But then, as I was conscious of a resolute dissent from all its practical conclusions, it occurred to me that it would not be fair to you not to let you know this, nor to myself not to enter a little into the grounds of that disagreement; and so I put off my acknowledgments, in the hope of being able to make them in a manner more worthy of the occasion, and of the confidence there should always be between us. But I have been so long detained in court, and so worried with other cases out of it for the last week, that I have found it impossible to find a single quiet hour in all that time for this purpose; and seeing no prospect of any relief for weeks yet to come, I have sat desperately down, at this past midnight hour, to disburden myself of this *impenitent* confession, and to try to tell you, in two sentences, the general nature of the

grounds on which I am compelled to refuse any adhesion to doctrines which I foresee will now have many proselytes.

The root of my objection is—that I conceive no tax, on what *you* understand by *income*, can be otherwise than unjust and unequal, and that it ought in all cases to be laid substantially on *property*. I think it a very reasonable proposition, that men should contribute for the support of the government which protects their interests, as nearly as possible in proportion to the value of the interests protected; and that in this, as in every other case, they should be required to pay only, as in vulgar phrase and fact, they *can afford* to pay. Every one feels and acts upon this plain maxim in ordinary life. The man who has a fixed and perpetual income *spends more* of it than the man with one that is temporary or precarious, and thus pays a larger share of all taxes laid on consumption or expenditure. In the same way he is expected to pay, and *does pay*, more in charity and voluntary benefactions. Why, then, should he not pay his direct taxes in the same proportion? and be required to relieve the necessities of the state, as he feels it his duty to do those of the destitute? and subscribe to the exchequer in the same higher column which he occupies among the contributors to the Infirmary or ragged schools? This is the view which common sense, and common feeling, impresses, I believe, on all men, and out of which no logical refinements can ever drive them.

But if we must come to quillets and quiddities,

and embarass ourselves with logomachies and verbal distinctions, I say, that *income* derived from realized property is *generically a different thing* from income derived from labour, or any other source, and that the short and temporary annuities, about which all your reasonings are conversant, do not, properly speaking, constitute *income at all*, but are really instalments of capital formerly invested, and now repaid in this fashion, and should no more be taxed as income than any other form of capital. Take this illustration:—I sell a farm for £10,000, which is all paid over in one year. I formerly paid income-tax on my *rent*, and now pay it on *the interest* only of the price. But suppose the bargain is, that the price should be paid in *five yearly instalments* of £2000 each, will anybody say that for these five years I am to pay as for an income of £2000 a year? But is this substantially different from the case of a man who buys an annuity of £2000 a year for five years, at a price of £9000 or £10,000. Before the purchase, he only paid income-tax on *the interest* of the price so invested, and why should he pay more on the annual instalments by which, in substance and reality, that investment is merely replaced to him? and it is the same with all terminable annuities. All that exceeds *the interest* of the price originally paid for them, or rather the interest of their present value, is truly an instalment of the principal repaid; and *income*-tax should only be paid on the part which is interest.

You observe somewhere, that the holder of a *short* annuity, if he does not like to pay tax on its

annual amount, may sell it, and purchase a *perpetual one* with the money, when he will only have to pay on a smaller income. But, supposing this conversion to be always practicable, can anything present so strange a picture of gross and unjust inequality, as that a man, whose actual means, wealth, credit, and power of spending, remain substantially the same, should pay four times as much, one year as another, as direct tax on all that property, merely in consequence of a change in the mode of its investment? The tax now is but light, and people grumble and submit to it. But if it were substituted for all other taxes, and consequently raised from 3 per cent. to 20 or 25, it is quite plain that no more capital would be invested in terminable annuities, and that the holders of temporary and precarious incomes would be driven into actual rebellion—as the inequality, though not really greater than now, would be then found intolerable.

When I say that the tax can only be fairly laid on property, I do not mean that it should not be actually so levied on anything but income, but only that it should be so levied on an income representing property, and proportionate to it—on the actual annual receipts—that is, where these are the permanent proceeds of property, and, in all other cases, only on such parts of the annual receipts as can be shewn to be what the actual present value of what is vested in the party, could produce annually in all time to come. I do not propose, therefore, to tax income derived from realized property higher than any other *income*, but

only to discriminate those parts of the annual receipts of other persons, which are truly *the income*, or *permanent* proceeds of the sum of their possessions, from those parts which are truly varying investments of the principal, and to charge the tax only on the former.

I am afraid I do not make this so clear as you would do, if you were of my way of thinking. But my notion is, that the only definition of *income*, which can ever make it a fair basis of taxation, is, that it is the annual produce of some property or vested value, which remains entire to the owner, after yielding such produce. Such undoubtedly is the definition of *the income* of those who live on the rents of land, or the interest of lent money; and if they pay only a certain portion of this *income* to the state, it is inconceivable to me how any other persons should be required to make a proportional payment, except out of an income of the *same description.* If it is required out of annual receipts of any other description, it is not paid out of income, in the same sense as that paid by landlords or monied men. But I take their case as the standard; and not proposing at all to enhance the assessment on them, or in any way to tax prospective or reversionary interests, I mean merely to bring the incomes of other persons down to their standard—to reduce it to its true value, according to that standard, and to tax it equally and alike.

The proposition then is, that all men should be taxed, only on that part of their annual receipts which it can be shown that the present value of all they are vested with might yield annually, in all

time to come. The owners of land and of lent money pay only on what is thus yielded, and why should the owners of any other source of produce pay on anything else? There may be practical and insurmountable difficulties in adjusting the actual levy of the tax in certain quarters, but no difficulty at all in fixing *the principle*, or even in applying it, in the great majority of cases.

In that of the holders of fixed annuities for definite terms, there would be no difficulty at all. The present value of the annuity may be calculated with absolute certainty, and the ordinary interest on that value, brought to a capital, would show the taxable amount of his income;—all beyond being as much realised portions of the principal, as if the landlord, in addition to his rents, were every year to receive the price of a farm which he had directed to be sold.

The case of *life* annuities, or incomes, as they are called, may be a little more difficult, as not admitting at once of a precise arithmetical solution. But every one knows that the present value of these also, is every day calculated in the insurance offices, and may therefore be brought to a capital as easily as the former.

Professional incomes are no doubt more perplexing, but are so plainly within the principle, that I have not the least doubt that an able actuary, with all the *data* before him, could make a very reliable estimate of the probable present value of all the future receipts of any professional person, or

at least a pretty near approximation to such an estimate. And here I am tempted to observe, that I have not been at all moved by the case you state at page 15, and which rather seems to be addressed to the feelings than to the judgment of your readers, since, in my view of the matter, there would be no higher per centage charged on the *proper income* of either of the parties, than on that of the other. The present value of all the future annual receipts of the man now actually drawing £10,000 a-year, would be estimated, say at ten years' purchase, and brought to a capital of £100,000, and on the ordinary interest of that, or some £5000 a-year, he would have to pay tax just as his less prosperous brother did on the interest of the £4000 or £5000 which yielded his income of £200. If you did not mean to suborn our feelings a little on behalf of your arguments, why make the retired capitalists the least healthy and wealthy of the two? It is quite as common a case to find a jobbing lawyer retired on a fortune of £100,000, and a sickly scholar plodding on at the bar, and not earning £200 a-year by his precarious practice. But would it *then* seem unjust to say that he ought not to be made to pay, as if this £200 was secured for ever by a capital of £5000, which was also entirely at his disposal?

I am aware that there may be difficulties in showing that the excess over the interest of the estimated present value of a future professional income is to be regarded as instalment of capital, and so distinguishable from income, as in the case of

fixed incomes, or annuities for life or terms of years; and I feel that I have not now time, or strength, to enter into the necessary explanation. But my notion generally is, that this excess, too, is truly but a replacing or realising of a vested capital, and so not fit to be taxed as income, more than in the other cases. Part of this capital is the money actually expended (or invested) by or for the party himself in his education, and in the books, instruments, or tools necessary for carrying on his profession. But the greater part, no doubt (for this might soon be replaced), must be held to consist in the talent, industry, strength, and ambition with which his Maker (like a munificent parent) has endowed him, and invested, so to speak, in his person, to be *reproduced* in the shape, not merely of pecuniary gain, but of gratitude, affection, and fame. It is only with the worldly profits that we have now to do, and these I conceive are to be considered as truly the return, or reproduction in a material form, of that intellectual capital, which is at all events wholly consumed and expended in the result, and does not remain, after yielding this temporary produce, like the lands or lent money of the landed or monied man. It comes under the same category, therefore, with that part of the temporary annuitants' receipts which is over the ordinary interest of its present value, and plainly resolves itself into a partial repayment of invested capital.

But it is past two o'clock, and so good night, and God bless you! I shall be ashamed, I daresay, to look over this to-morrow!

Friday morning.—And *I am ashamed;*—pretty thoroughly, both of the length and the crudity; and therefore, though I see much to be supplied, I do not venture to add anything. Only, you will understand, that I apply the views last stated to the case of incomes derived from *trade* and *manufactures*, holding that the only proper or taxable income, in these cases, is that constituted by the interest on the stock at any time held in the concern, and that all *surplus* receipts are to be considered as *capital* in a state of transition. I had something to say also as to the modifications the argument may receive from the income-tax being taken as *temporary* or *perpetual*, as to which I think you have fallen into some fallacies, and as to the income derived from mere labour, or the wages of unskilled artizans, though I think you will easily guess how I would deal with these questions.

And so at last I have done, and feel sure that however you may pity my judicial blindness, you will not be at all angry at the irreverent petulance with which you know (I hope) that I claim the privilege of talking *inter familiares.*

I fear we shall never thoroughly understand each other, even on these subjects, till we have a long midnight conversation at Craigcrook, or St. Kilda,* where we can hold our Tusculan disputation face to face, without the nausea of reading and writing these dull and blotty pages. Remember though, that I am not, by many degrees, so confident and presump-

* St. Kilda belongs to Mr. Macleod.

tuous as these familiar petulances would make me appear to the uninitiated; so that, if you will put yourself right, and me as wrong as you please, in a future edition, you will find me as meek and submissive as a lamb, and ready to make any *palinode* (do you know that word of the Canonists?) but in the meantime I hold you at defiance!

And so God bless you again, my dear M'Leod. We are all pretty well here, and actually meditating a run up to your latitudes about the beginning of April, though I cannot help having misgivings as to the prudence of such a movement on Charlotte's part. She has, I thank God, had no recurrence of her malady for many months, but has been living so very careful and cautious a life that I shrink from the prospect of any such disturbance of it, when the time comes, and certainly shall run no risks.

I trust Mrs. M'Leod has got over her influenza long ago. This sweet vernal weather should scatter the seeds of all such disorders.—Ever and ever yours.

207.—*To Mr. Empson.*

(On seeing a letter about Macaulay's History.)

Craigcrook, Tuesday, 20th March 1849.

My dear E.—I have read ——'s letter with some surprise. I really do not know what it is that he would exact from a historian—a deduction it seems to be, and authentic announcement of all the great "universal and eternal truths," which it is supposed that a due consideration of events would

enable him to establish in *law*, *religion*, *political economy*, and *morals*! A modest addition this to the province and task of a historian; and in regard to sciences, too, in which what are held to be established truths by one set of authorities, are impugned as pestilent heresies by another as weighty. If there are catholic and eternal truths, now so proved and matured as to be capable of being demonstrated in any of these sciences, it is plain at least that this can only be done by reasoning and controversy, and not by dogmatic deduction from the local history of a very brief period; and I cannot think it any part of the historian's duty to supply this demonstration. If it be, at least it must be admitted that it is a duty which has been hitherto neglected. No historian that I know of, either ancient or modern, has professed or attempted to add such an encyclopædia to his chronicle. Macaulay *has* made one addition to the task, that of exhibiting, not only the great acts and great actions of the time, but the great body of the nation affected by these acts, and from whose actual condition they truly derive, not merely their whole importance, but their true moral character. By this innovation he has, to the conviction, I think, of all men, added so much, not only to the interest, but to the utility and practical lessoning, of history, that I feel confident it will be universally adopted, and no future writer have a chance of success who neglects it. But the addition which —— now requires, and demands, indeed, under pain of most grave censure, would be quite as much an innovation; and,

instead of adding to the interest of our histories, would render them unreadable for all but the indefatigable indagators of transcendental truths. But I deny utterly the two propositions, upon the assumption of which all this *anathema* is rested—1st, That Macaulay has aimed chiefly at interesting and entertaining his readers; and 2d, That he has (either studiously or indolently) put them on a scanty allowance of instruction, admonition, or suggestion. As to the last, I will maintain boldly to the face of ———, and any twelve select jurymen he may himself name, that no historian of any age has been so prodigal of original and profound reflective suggestion, aye and weighty and authoritative decision also, on innumerable questions of great difficulty and general interest; though these precious contributions are not ostentatiously ticketed and labelled, as separate gifts to mankind, but woven, with far better grace and effect, into the net tissue of the story. And then as to his aiming only to interest and amuse, I say first, that though he has attained that end, it is only incidentally, and not by aiming at it, as an end, at all; and second, that in good truth, it is chiefly by his success in the higher object at which he did aim that he has really delighted and interested his readers. The vivacity and colour of his style may have been the first attraction of many to his volumes; but I feel assured that it is the impression of the weight, and novelty, and clearness of the information conveyed—the doubts dispelled—the chaos reduced to order—the mastery over facts and views formerly so perplexing,

and now so pleasingly imparted, that have given the book its great and universal charm, and settled it in the affections of all its worthy admirers.

I forgot to say that *the general* historian has hitherto been dispensed from settling all debateable questions in law, public policy, religion, &c., by leaving these to writers who confine themselves each to one of these great subjects. Hallam writes a *constitutional* history—and others, histories of *commerce—philosophy—religion*—and *law*; and very large and very valuable works are produced under these titles. But what dimensions would a work assume that undertook to embody *all* these, or even the substance of them, in a general history. Macaulay has been reproached with expanding the history of four years into two large volumes; I think quite unjustly. But how many would he have required if he had attempted to incorporate with his narrative a satisfactory deduction of all the great truths upon which it had any bearing? He has given details and *reasons* too—very fully in so far as they were necessary to the exposition of the great truths which *he did propose* to establish. For I take it that *it was* with a view to certain great truths that his history was undertaken; and these, which I think it has made out beyond all future contradiction, are—1st, the *intolerable and personally hateful* tyranny of the Stuarts; 2d, the absolute *necessity* of at least as radical and marked a revolution as was effected in 1688; and, 3d, the singular felicity with which that revolution was saved from the stain of blood, and

all crimes of violence, by the peculiar relation in which William stood to the dynasty, and the still more peculiar character and European position of that great prince. Had he not been in the line of succession we should have had an attempt at a new commonwealth, and another civil war; and had he not been partly an alien, and looking more to European than merely English interests, the victory in that war must have been of one section of the people over another, with all the ranklings and aggravated antipathies, which the mere predominance of a sort of neutral party or common umpire tended to suppress and extinguish. These points, I think Macaulay has made out triumphantly—and not by eloquent and lively writing, but by patient and copious accumulation and lucid arrangement of facts and details, often separately insignificant, but constituting at last *an induction* which leaves no shade of doubt on the conclusion. This book, therefore, has *already*, in the course of three little months, scattered to the winds, and swept finally from the minds of all thinking Englishmen, those lingerings of Jacobite prejudice, which the eloquence and perversions of Hume, and the popular talents of Scott and other writers of fiction, had restored to our literature, and but too much familiarised to our feelings, in the last fifty years. This is a great work, and a great triumph, and ought, I think, so to be hailed and rejoiced in. All *convertible* men must now be disabused of their prejudices, and all future generations grow up in a light, round which no cloud

can again find means to gather. As to the objections that he is too much on a footing of personal intimacy with his characters, I cannot say I see much weight in it. If he speaks of them with more confidence than we should feel entitled to do, I am willing to think that this is because he has been at pains to get at more knowledge of them. And with regard to the most remarkable, the means of getting very minute knowledge were fortunately very abundant. Halifax, and Churchill, and Sunderland, and Burnet, are drawn from their own writings and recorded sayings; and I have no idea that the accuracy of M.'s portraiture of any of them will ever be seriously questioned.

208.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Craigcrook, 27th July 1849.

My ever dear Dickens—I have been very near dead; and am by no means sure that I shall *ever* recover from the malady which has confined me mostly to bed for the last five weeks, and which has only, within the last three days, allowed me to leave my room for a few hours in the morning. But I must tell you, that, living or dying, I retain for you, unabated and unimpaired, the same cordial feelings of love, gratitude, and admiration, which have been part of my nature, and no small part of my pride and happiness, for the last twenty years. I could not let *another* number of your *public* benefactions appear, without some token of my private and pecu-

liar thankfulness, for the large share of gratification I receive from them all; and therefore I rise from my couch, and indite these few lines (the second I have been able to make out in my own hand since my illness), to explain why I have not written before, and how little I am changed in my feelings towards you, by sickness, or a nearer prospect of mortality. I am better, however, within these last days; and hope still to see your bright eye, and clasp your open hand, once more at least before the hour of final separation. In the meantime, you will be glad, though I hope not surprised, to hear that I have no acute suffering, no disturbing apprehensions or low spirits; but possess myself in a fitting and indeed cheerful tranquillity, without impatience, or any unseemly anxiety as to the issue I am appointed to abide.

With kindest and most affectionate remembrances to your true-hearted and affectionate Kate, and all your blooming progeny, ever and ever, my dear Dickens, affectionately yours.

209.—*To Mr. Alexander Maclagan, Edinburgh,*

(Who had just sent him a volume of his Poems,)

24 Moray Place,
Friday, 4th January 1850.

Dear Sir—I am very much obliged to you for the poems, and the kind letter you have sent me, and am glad to find that you are meditating an enlarged edition.

I have already read all these on the slips, and think them, on the whole, fully equal to those in the former volume. I am most pleased, I believe, with that which you have entitled "Sister's Love;" which is at once very touching, very graphic, and very elegant. Your summer sketches have beautiful passages in all of them, and a pervading joyousness and kindliness of feeling, as well as a vein of grateful devotion, which must recommend them to all good minds. "The Scorched Flowers" I thought the most picturesque. Your muse seems to have been unusually fertile this last summer. It will always be a pleasure to me to hear of your well-being, or to be able to do you any service.

If you publish by subscription, you may set me down for five or six copies; and do not scruple to apply to me for any farther aid you may think I can lend you.—Meantime, believe me, with all good wishes, your obliged and faithful, &c.

210.—*To Charles Dickens, Esq.*

Edinburgh, 6th January 1850.

Bless you, my dear Dickens, and happy new years for centuries to you and yours! A thousand thanks for your kind letter of December, and your sweet, soothing Copperfield of the new year. It is not a hinging or marking chapter in the story of the life, but it is full of good matter, and we are all the better for it. The scene with Agnes is the most

impressive, though there is much promise in Traddles. Uriah is too disgusting; and I confess I should have been contented to have heard no more of the Micawbers. But there is no saying what *you* may make of them, &c.

It cheers and delights me, too, to have such pleasing accounts of the well-being and promise of your children; and it is a new motive for my trying to live a little longer, that I may hear of the first honours attained by my name-boy. God bless him, and all of you!

We are all tolerably well here, I thank you; Mrs. Jeffrey, I am happy to say, has been really *quite well* for many months, and, in fact, by much the most robust of the two. My fairy grandchild, too, is bright and radiant through all the glooms of winter and age, and fills the house with sunshine and music. I am old and vulnerable, but still able for my work, and not a bit morose or querulous; "and by the mass the heart is in the trim." I love all that is loveable, or can respond to love as intensely as in youth, and hope to die before that capacity forsakes me.

It is like looking forward to spring to think of seeing your beaming eye again! Come, then, to see us when you can, and bring that true-hearted Kate with you,—but not as you did last time, to frighten us, and imperil her. Let that job be well over first, and consider whether it had not better be the last? There can never be too many Dickenses in the world; but these *overbearings* exhaust the parent

tree, and those who cannot hope to repose in the shade of the saplings, must shrink from the risk of its decay.

I daresay you do right to send one boy to Eton; but what is most surely learned there is the habit of wasteful expense, and, in ordinary natures, a shame and contempt for plebeian parents. But I have faith in races, and feel that *your* blood will resist such attaints. You do not think it impertinent in me to refer to them? I speak to you as I would to a younger brother. And so God bless you again, and ever yours.

211.—*To Mr. John Crawford, Alloa.*

(Who had sent him a volume of his Poems.)

Edinburgh, 6th January 1850.

Dear Sir—I am very much obliged to you for the pretty little volume you have had the kindness to send me, and beg to offer you my sincere thanks for the honour you have done, and the pleasure you have afforded me. For though it only came to my hands yesterday, I have already read every word it contains, and have really been much gratified by the perusal. It has always been a source of pride and satisfaction to me to find so many of my countrymen, in the humbler and more laborious walks of life, addicted to pursuits so elevating and refined as those with which you appear to have dignified and solaced your hours of leisure; and particularly gratifying when they succeed in these lofty endeavours,

as I think you may be said to have succeeded. Not, however, that I think you, strictly speaking, will attain either fortune or fame by your poetry, but because you have done enough to show that you have acquired a genuine relish for those ennobling studies, and a capacity for enjoying an elegant amusement, which will both promote your moral culture, and bring you into contact with minds of a higher order than might otherwise have claimed affinity with you.

There is much graphic beauty, and many pleasing touches of kindly feeling, in almost all your pieces. But I am most pleased with those that embody the boundless tenderness of maternal affection, or shadow forth the ineffable loveliness of sinless and trusting childhood. Indeed, I have always been charmed, and in some measure surprised by the delicate soft heartedness which have so generally distinguished the recent poetical productions of our Scottish tradesmen and artizans, and which contrast so favourably with the license in which many of their rivals in higher stations indulge.

It will give me pleasure to hear of the success of your modest publication, and still more to be able to do you any service. Meantime, believe me, with all good wishes, your obliged and faithful.

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